ADVENTURES IN CANADA

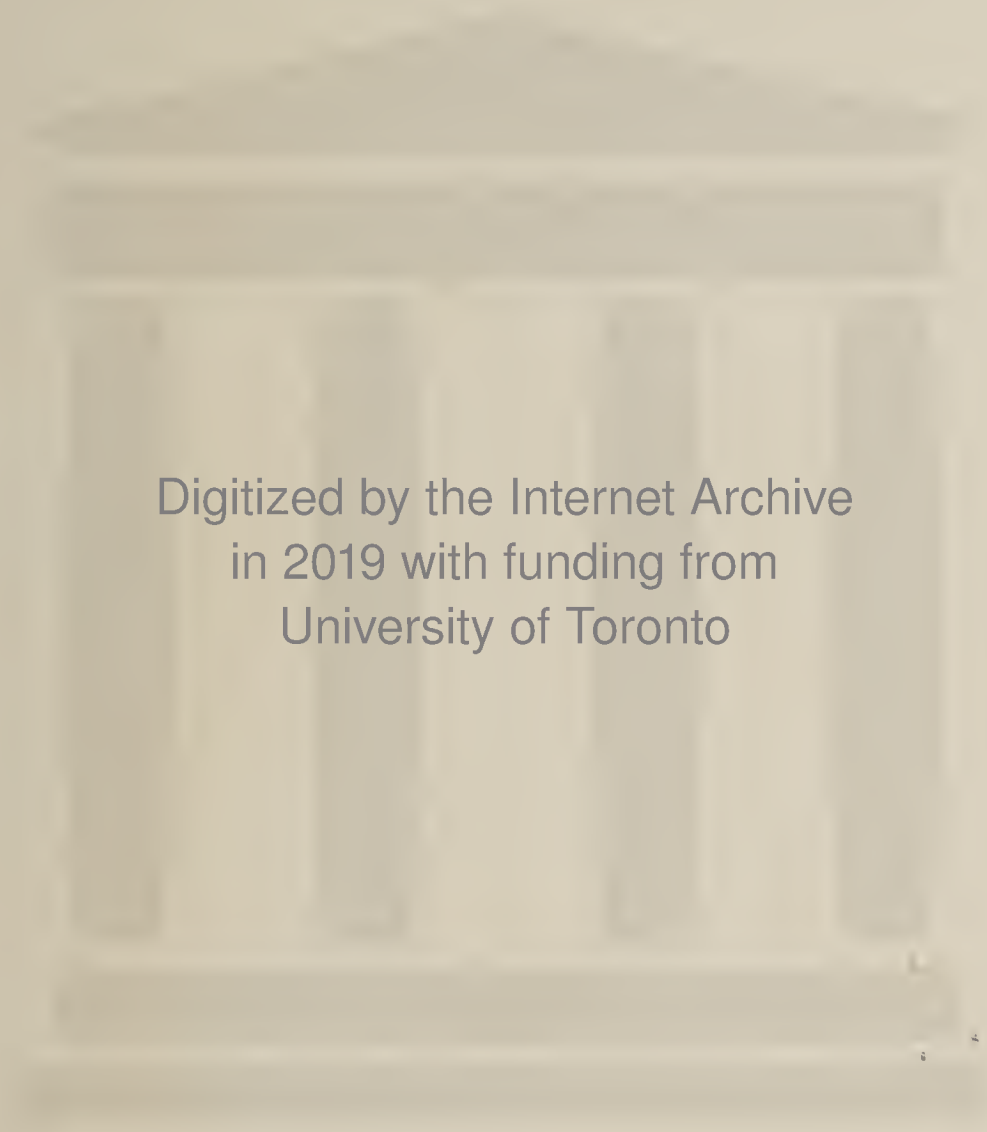
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SPEARING FISH BY TORCHLIGHT.

ADVENTURES IN CANADA;

OR,

LIFE IN THE WOODS.

EDITED BY

JOHN C. GEIKIE.

Illustrated.



PHILADELPHIA:
PORTER & COATES.

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Boy-dreams about travelling. — Our family determines to go to Canada. — The first day on board. — Cure for sea-sickness. — Our passengers. — Henry's adventure. — We encounter a storm. —Height of the waves. — The bottom of the ocean. — A fossil ship. — The fishing-grounds. — See whales and icebergs. — Porpoises. — Sea-birds. — Lights in the sea. — The great Gulf of St. Lawrence. — Thick ice-fogs. — See land at last. — Sailing up the river. — Land at Quebec.

I WONDER if ever there were a boy who did not wish to travel? I know I did, and used to spend many an hour thinking of all the wonderful things I should see, and of what I would bring home when I returned. Books of travel I devoured greedily — and very good reading for boys, as well as for grown men, I have always thought them. I began with "Robinson Crusoe," like most boys — for who has not read his story? Burckhardt, the traveller, found a young Arab reading a translation of it in the door of his father's tent in the desert. But I don't think I ever wished to be like him, or to roam in a wild romantic way, or "go to sea,"

as it is called, like many other boys I have known, which is a very different thing from having harmless fancies, that one would like to see strange races of men and strange countries. Some of my schoolmates, whom nothing would content but being sailors, early cured me of any thought of being one, if ever I had it, by what I knew of their story when they came back. One of them, James Roper, I did not see for some years after he went off, but when I met him at last among the ships, he was so worn and broken down I hardly knew him again, and he had got so many of the low forecastle ways about him, that I could not bear his company. Another, Robert Simpson, went one voyage to Trebizond, but that cured him. He came back perfectly contented to stay at home, as he had found the romance of sailoring, which had lured him away, a very different thing from the reality. He had never counted on being turned out of his bed every other night or so for something or other, as he was, or being clouted with a wet swab by some sulky fellow, or having to fetch and carry for the men, and do their bidding, or to climb wet rigging in stormy weather, and get drenched every now and then, without any chance of changing his clothes; not to speak of the difference between his nice room at home and the close, crowded, low-roofed forecastle, where he could hardly see for tobacco smoke, and where he had to eat and sleep with companions whom he would not have thought

of speaking to before he sailed. He came back quite sobered down, and after a time went to study law, and is now a barrister in good practice.

Yet I was very glad when I learned that we were going to America. The great woods, and the sport I would have with the deer and bears in them, and the Indians, of whom I had read so often, and the curious wildness there was in the thought of settling where there were so few people, and living so differently from any thing I had known at home, quite captivated me. I was glad when the day of sailing came, and went on board our ship, the *Ocean King*, with as much delight as if I had been going on a holiday trip. There were eight of us altogether — five brothers and three sisters (my father and mother were both dead), and I had already one brother in America, while another staid behind to push his way in England. The anchor once heaved, we were soon on our way down the Mersey, and the night fell on us while we were still exploring the wonders of the ship, and taking an occasional peep over the side at the shore. When we had got into the channel, the wind having come round to the south-east, the captain resolved to go by the northern route, passing the upper end of Ireland. All we saw of it, however, was very little; indeed, most of us did not see it at all, for the first swell of the sea had sent a good many to their berths, in all stages of sickness. One old gentleman, a Scotchman, who had been boasting

that he had a preventive that would keep him clear of it, made us all laugh by his groans and wretchedness; for his specific had not only failed, but had set him off amongst the first. He had been told that if he took enough gingerbread and whiskey, he might face any sea, and he had followed the advice faithfully; but as the whiskey itself was fit to make him sick, even on shore, you may judge how much it and the gingerbread together helped him when the ship was heaving and rolling under his feet. We boys did not fail, of course, when we heard him lamenting that either the one or the other had crossed his lips, to come over their names pretty often in his hearing, and advise each other to try some, every mention of the words bringing out an additional shudder of disgust from the unfortunate sufferer. My eldest sister had sent me, just before coming on board, for some laudanum and mustard, which she was to mix and apply some way that was sure, she said, to keep her well; but she got sick so instantly on the ship beginning to move, that she forgot them, and we had the mustard afterwards at dinner in America, and the laudanum was a long time in the house for medicine. For a few days every thing was unpleasant enough, but gradually all got right again, and even the ladies ventured to reappear on deck.

Of course, among a number of people gathered in a ship, you were sure to meet strange characters. A little light man in a wig was soon the butt of the

cabin, he would ask such silly questions, and say such outrageous things. He was taking cheeses, and tea, and I don't know what else, to America with him, for fear he would get nothing to eat there; and he was dreadfully alarmed, by one of the passengers, who had been over before, telling him he would find cockroach pie the chief dainty in Canada. I believe the cheeses he had with him had come from America at first. He thought the best thing to make money by in Canada, was to sow all the country with mustard-seed, it yielded such a great crop, he said; and he seemed astonished at all the table laughing at the thought of what could possibly be done with it. There was another person in the cabin — a stiff, conceited man, with a very strange head, the whole face and brow running back from the chin, and great standing-out ears. He was a distant relation of some admiral, I believe; but if he had been the admiral himself, he could not have carried his head higher than he did. Nobody was good enough for him. It seemed a condescension in him to talk with any one. But he soon lost all his greatness, notwithstanding his airs, by his asking one day, when we were speaking about Italy, "What river it was that ran north and south along the coast?" in that country. We were speaking of a road, and he thought it was about a river. Then he asked, the same day, where the Danube was, and if it were a large river; and when some one spoke about Sicily, and said

that it had been held by the Carthaginians, he wished to know if these people held it now. Boy as I was, I could not help seeing what a dreadful thing it was to be so ignorant; and I determined that I would never be like Mr. —— (I sha'n't tell his name), at any rate, but would learn as much as ever I could.

I dare say we were troublesome enough to the captain sometimes, but, if so, he took his revenge on one of us after a time. One day we were playing with a rope and pulley which was hooked high up in the rigging. There was a large loop at the one end, and the other, after passing through the block, hung down on the deck. Henry had just put this loop over his shoulders, and fitted it nicely below his arms, when the captain chanced to see him, and, in an instant, before he knew what he was going to do, he had hauled him up ever so high, with all the passengers looking at him and laughing at the ridiculous figure he cut. It was some time before he would let him down, and as he was a pretty big lad, and thought himself almost a man, he felt terribly affronted. But he had nothing for it when he got down but to hide in his berth till his pride got cooled and till the laugh stopped. We were all careful enough to keep out of Captain Morrison's way after that.

One way or other the days passed very pleasantly to us boys, whatever they were to older people. It was beautiful, when the weather was fine and the

wind right, to see how we glided through the green galleries of the sea, which rose, crested with white, at each side. One day and night we had, what we thought, a great storm. The sails were nearly all struck, and I heard the mate say that the two that were left did more harm than good, because they only drove the ship deeper into the water. When it grew nearly dark, I crept up the cabin-stairs to look along the deck at the waves ahead. I could see them rising like great black mountains seamed with snow, and coming with an awful motion towards us, making the ship climb a huge hill, as it were, the one moment, and go down so steeply the next, that you could not help being afraid that it was sinking bodily into the depths of the sea. The wind, meanwhile, roared through the ropes and yards, and every little while there was a hollow thump of some wave against the bows, followed by the rush of water over the bulwarks. I had read the account of the storm in Virgil, and am sure he must have seen something like what I saw that night to have written it. There is an ode in Horace to him, when he was on the point of setting out on a voyage. Perhaps he saw it then. The description in the Bible is, however, the grandest picture of a storm at sea: "The Lord commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves of the deep. They mount up to heaven, they go down again to the depths: their soul is melted because of trouble. They reel to and fro

and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wit's end." "The Lord hath his way in the whirlwind and in the storm, and the clouds are the dust of his feet." Yet I have found since, that though the waves appear so very high, they are much lower than we suppose, our notions of them being taken from looking up at them from the hollow between two. Dr. Scoresby, a great authority, measured those of the Atlantic in different weathers, and found that they seldom rise above fifteen feet, a great storm only causing them to rise to thirty-five, or, at most, forty, which is very different from "running mountains high," as we often hear said. I could not help pitying the men who had to go up to the yards and rigging in the terrible wind and rain, with the ship heaving and rolling so dreadfully, and work with the icy cold sheets and ropes. Poor fellows! it seems a wonder how they ever can hold on. Indeed, they too often lose their hold, and then there is no hope for them; down they go, splash into the wild sea, with such a scream of agony as no one can ever forget after having heard it. My brother, on crossing some years after, saw a man thus lost — a fine, healthy Orkneyman, whom some sudden lurch of the ship threw from the outside of the yard. Though it was broad daylight, and though they would have done any thing to help him as they saw him rising on the wave, further and further behind them, swimming bravely, they were perfectly unable even to make an effort,

the sea rolling so wildly, and the ship tearing on through the waves so swiftly. So they had, with hearts like to break, to let him drown before their very eyes.

As we got further over we heard a great deal about the Banks of Newfoundland, and, naturally enough, thought the shores of that island were what was meant; but we found, when we reached them, that it was only the name given to the shallower part of the sea to the south of the coast. The soundings of the electric telegraph have since shown, that from Ireland on the one side, and Newfoundland on the other, a level table-land forms the floor of the ocean, at no great depth, for some hundreds of miles, the space between sinking suddenly on both sides into unfathomable abysses. What the depth of the Atlantic is at the deepest is not known, but I remember seeing a notice of a surveying ship, which had been able to sink a line in the southern section of it to the wonderful depth of seven miles, finding the bottom only with that great length of rope. The banks are, no doubt, formed in part from the material carried by the great ocean current which flows up from the Gulf of Mexico, washing the shores all the way; and then, passing Newfoundland, reaches across even to the most northern parts of Europe and the Arctic circle. If the quantity of mud, and gravel, and sand deposited on the banks, be great enough to bury some of the many wrecks of all sizes which go to the bot-

tom there, what a wonderful sight some future ages may have! The floor of the ocean has often, elsewhere, been gradually or suddenly raised into dry land; and if the Banks should be so, and the wrecks be buried in them before they had rotted away, geologists of those days will perhaps be laying bare, in some quarry, now far down in the sea, the outline of a fossil ship, with all the things it had in it when it was lost!

We met a great many fishing-boats in this part, some from Newfoundland, some from Nova Scotia, others, again, from the northern coasts of the United States, with not a few all the way from France. We were becalmed one day close to some from the State of Maine, and one of them very soon sent off a boat to us, with some as fine-looking men in it as you could well see, to barter fish with the captain for some pork. For a piece or two of the sailor's mess pork, which I thought dreadful looking, it was so yellow and fat, they threw on board quite a number of cod-fish and some haddocks, giving us, I thought, by far the best of the exchange. I am told that a great many of these fishing-vessels are lost every year by storms, and occasionally some are run down and sunk in a moment by a ship passing over them. They are so rash as to neglect hanging out lights, in many cases, and the weather is, moreover, often so very foggy, that, even when they do, it is impossible to see them. The ships, if going at all fast, sound fog-horns every now and

then on such days — that is, they should do it — but I fear they sometimes forget. There is far less humanity in some people than one would like to see, even the chance of causing death itself seeming so to give them no concern. I remember once going in a steamer up the Bay of Fundy, over part of the same ground, when we struck a fishing-schooner in the dead of the night; but the captain only swore at it for being in his way, and never stopped to see if it were much injured or not, though, for any thing he or any one knew, it might be in a sinking state. Whether it be thoughtlessness or passion at the time, or stony hard-heartedness, it is an awful thing to be unkind. Uncle Toby, who put the fly out of the window rather than kill it, makes us love him for his tenderness, even in an instance so slight.

One day we saw two whales at a short distance from the ship, but their huge black backs, and the spout of water they made from their breathing-holes when they were taking a fresh breath, was all we saw of them. Some of the youngsters, however, made some sport out of the sight, by telling a poor simple woman, who had got into the cabin, how they had read of a ship that once struck on a great black island in the middle of the sea, and went down, and how the sailors got off on the rock, and landed their provisions, and were making themselves comfortable, when one of them, unfortunately, thought he would kindle a fire to cook

something; but had hardly done it before they discovered that they had got on the back of a sleeping whale, which no sooner felt the heat burning it than it plunged down into the waves, with all on it! It is a part of one of the boy's stories we have all read, but the poor creature believed it, listening to them with her eyes fixed on their faces, and expressing her pity for the sailors who had made the mistake.

We had two or three icebergs in sight, when near Newfoundland, and very beautiful they were. Only think of great mountains of ice shining in the sun with every color that light can give, and cascades of snowy-white water leaping down their sides into the sea. Those we saw were perhaps from eighty to a hundred feet high, but they are sometimes even two hundred; and as there are eight feet of ice below the water for every one above, this would make a two hundred feet iceberg more than the third of a mile from the bottom to the top. They are formed on the shores of the icy seas in the north, by the alternate melting and freezing of the edge of those ice-rivers which we call glaciers, which get thrust out from the land till they are undermined by the sea, and cracked by summer thaws, and then tumble into the waters, to find their way wherever the currents may carry them. Dr. Kane and Captain M'Clintock both saw them in the different stages of their growth; and I don't know a more interesting narrative than

that of the ascent to the top of the great frozen stream, on the shore of Washington's Land, by the former, and his looking away to the north, east, and south, over the vast, broken, many-colored continent of ice, which stretches in awful depth and unbroken continuity over Greenland. The icebergs often carry off from the shore a vast quantity of stones and gravel, which gets frozen into them. Dr. Scoresby says he has seen one of them carrying, he should think, from fifty to a hundred thousand tons of rocks on it. It has, no doubt, been in this way that most of the great blocks and boulders of stone, different from any in their neighborhood, which lie scattered over many parts of the world, have been taken to their present places.*

I must not forget the porpoises — great pig-like fish, which once or twice mocked us by racing alongside, darting a-head every now and then like arrows, as if to show us how slow we were in comparison — nor the birds, which never left us the whole way, and must sleep on the water when they do sleep — nor the beautiful lights which shone in the sea at night. We used to sit at the stern looking at them for long together. The ridges of the waves would sometimes seem all on fire, and streaks and spots of light would follow the ship with every

* What is known as the "boulder clay," however, seems rather to be the moraine of ancient glaciers — that is, the wreck of broken rocks torn away by them in their passage through the valleys, and now left bare by their having melted away.

moment's progress. Sometimes, as the water rushed round the stern and up from beneath, they would glitter like a shower of stars or diamonds, joining presently in a sheet of flame. Now they would look like balls of glowing metal; then, presently, they would pass like ribbons of light. There was no end to the combinations or changes of beauty; the very water joined to heighten them by its ceaseless mingling of colors, from the whitest foam, through every shade of green, to the dark mass of the ocean around. These appearances come from the presence of myriads of creatures of all sizes, chiefly the different kinds of Sea-nettles,* some of which are so small as to need a microscope to show their parts, while others form large masses, and shine like the suns of these watery constellations. They are luminous by a phosphoric light they are able to secrete; their brilliancy being thus of the same kind as that which smokes and burns in the dark from the skin of fish, and makes the lights in so many different insects. The phosphorus used in manufactures is obtained from burned bones. I have often seen a similar light in the back woods on the old half-rotten stumps of trees which had been cut down. The glow-worm of England and the fire-fly of Canada are familiar examples of the same wonderful power of self-illumination. Indeed, few countries are without

* The jelly-fish, or medusa, which we so often see on our beaches, is a familiar example of the class.

some species of insect possessing this characteristic. One cannot help thinking how universal life is when they see it as it is shown in these sights at sea — millions on millions of shining creatures in the path of a single ship ; and the happiness which life gives us in our youth makes us admire the kindness of God, who, by making every thing so full of it, has crowded the air, and earth, and waters, with so much enjoyment.

Our sabbaths on board were not quite like those at home ; but, as we had a clergyman with us, who was going with his family to a chaplaincy in the Far West, we had prayers and sermons in the forenoon, when the weather permitted. But a good many of the passengers were not very respectful to the day, and some, who, I dare say, were very orderly on Sundays at home, seemed to act as if to be on a voyage made every day a week-day.

We were now in the great Gulf of St. Lawrence, which was called so because Cabot, who discovered it, chanced to do so on the day set apart to that saint. But we were some time in it before we saw land, and there was more care taken about the position of the ship than ever before, for fear we should, like so many vessels, fall foul of the island of Anticosti, or run on shore in a fog. We had had thick weather occasionally from our approaching Newfoundland, and it still prevailed now and then till we got near Quebec. The icebergs com-

ing down from the north, and the different temperature of the air coming over them and over the great frozen regions, cause these thick mists, by condensing the evaporation from the warmer sea, and preventing its rising into the air. We could sometimes hardly see the length of the bowsprit before us, and as the sun would be shut out for days together, so that we could not find out our position, it made every one anxious and half afraid. Many ships are lost by being muffled in these thick clouds. They drive, at full speed, against icebergs or on sunken rocks, or ashore on the wild coast, when they think themselves safe in an open clear sea. I often wondered, when crossing again, some years after, in a great steamer, how we ever escaped. On we would go in it, with the fog-bell ringing and horns blowing, to be sure, but in perfect blind ignorance of what lay a few yards ahead. Other ships, icebergs, rocks, or the iron shore, might be close at hand, yet on, on, up and down went the great shafts, and beat, beat, went the huge paddle-wheels — the ship trembling all over, as if even it were half uneasy. It is a wonder, not that so many, but that so few ships should be lost, covering the sea as they do at all seasons, like great flocks of seafowl.

After a time the land became visible at last, first on one side and then on the other, and the pilot was taken on board — a curious looking man to most of us, in his extraordinary mufflings, and with

his broken French-English. As we sailed up the river the views on the banks became very pleasing. The white houses, with their high roofs, like those we see in pictures of French chateaux, and the churches roofed with tin, and as white underneath as the others, and the line of fields of every shade, from the brown earth to the dark green wheat, and the curious zigzag wooden fences, and the solemn woods, every here and there coming out at the back of the picture, like great grim sentinels of the land, made it impossible to stay away from the deck. Then there was the grand sunsets, with the water like glass, and the shores reflected in them far down into their depths, and the curtains of gold and crimson, and violet, and green, by turns, as the twilight faded into night.

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CHAPTER II.

Quebec. — Wolfe. — Montcalm's skull. — Toronto. — We set off for the bush. — Mud-roads. — A rough ride. — Our Log-house. — How it was built. — Our barn. — We get oxen and cows. — Elephant and Buckeye. — Unpacking our stores. — What some of our neighbors brought when they came. — Hot days. — Bush costumes. — Sun-strokes. — My sisters have to turn salamanders. — Our part of the house-work.

OUR landing at Quebec was only for a very short time, till some freight was delivered, our vessel having to go up to Montreal before we left it. But we had stay enough to let us climb the narrow streets of this, the oldest of Canadian cities, and to see some of its sights. The view from different points was unspeakably grand to us after being so long pent up in a ship. Indeed, in itself it is very fine. Cape Diamond and the fortifications hanging high in the air — the great basin below, like a sheet of the purest silver, where a hundred sail of the line might ride in safety — the village spires, and the fields of every shape dotted with countless white cottages, the silver thread of the River St. Charles winding hither and thither among them, and, in the distance, shutting in this varied loveliness, a range of lofty mountains,

purple and blue by turns, standing out against the sky in every form of picturesque beauty, made altogether a glorious panorama.

Of course, the great sight of sights to a Briton is the field of battle on the Plains of Abraham, where Wolfe, on the 13th September, 1759, won for us, at the price of his own life, the magnificent colonies of what is now British North America. Wolfe's body was taken to England for burial, and now lies in the vault below the parish church at Greenwich. That of Montcalm, the French general, who, also, was killed in the battle, was buried in the Ursuline Convent, where they showed us a ghastly relic of him — his fleshless, eyeless skull, kept now in a little glass case, as if it were a thing fit to be exhibited. It was to me a horrible sight to look at the grinning death's head, and think that it was once the seat of the gallant spirit who died so nobly at his post. His virtues, which all honor, are his fitting memorial in every mind, and his appropriate monument is the tomb erected by his victorious enemies — not this parading him in the dishonor and humiliation of the grave. It is the spirit of which we speak when we talk of a hero, and there is nothing in common with it and the poor mouldering skull that once contained it.

Quebec is, as I have said, a beautiful place in summer, but it must be bad enough in winter. The snow lies till well on in May, and it is so deep that, in the country, every thing but houses and

trees and other high objects are covered. The whole landscape is one unbroken sheet of white, over which you may go in any direction without meeting or seeing the smallest obstacle. But people get used to any thing; and even the terrible cold is so met and resisted by double window sashes, and fur caps, and gloves, and coats, that the inhabitants seem actually to enjoy it.

When we got to Toronto, we found that my brother Robert, who was already in the country, had been travelling in different directions to look out a place for us, and had at length bought a farm in the township of Bidport, on the banks of the River St. Clair. We therefore stayed no longer in Toronto than possible, but it took us some time to get every thing put right after the voyage, and we were further detained by a letter from my brother, telling us that the house on the farm could not be got ready for us for a week or two longer. We had thus plenty of time to look about us, and strange enough every thing seemed. The town is very different now-a-days; but, then, it was a straggling collection of wooden houses, of all sizes and shapes, a large one next to a miserable one-story shell, placed with its end to the street. There were a few brick houses, but only a few. The streets were like a newly-ploughed field in rainy weather, for mud, the wagons often sinking almost to the axles in it. There was no gas, and the pavements were both few and bad. It has

come to be a fine place now, but to us it seemed very wretched. While we were waiting, we laid in whatever provision we thought we would need for a good while, every thing being much cheaper in Toronto than away in the bush. A month or less saw us moving, my sisters going with Andrew and Henry by water, while Frederic was left behind in an office; Robert, my Canadian brother, and I going by land, to get some business done up the country as we passed. The stage in which we took our places was a huge affair, hung on leather springs, with a broad shelf behind, supported by straps from the upper corners, for the luggage. There were three seats, the middle one movable, which it needed to be, as it came exactly in the centre of the door. The machine and its load were drawn by four horses, rough enough, but of good bottom, as they say. The first few miles were very pleasant, for they had been macadamized, but after that, what travelling! The roads had not yet dried up, after the spring rains and thaws, and as they were only mud, and much travelled, the most the horses could do was to pull us through at a walk. When we came to a very deep hole, we had to get out till the coach floundered through it. Every here and there, where the water had overflowed from the bush and washed the road completely away in its passage across it, the ground was strewn with rails which had been taken from the nearest fences to hoist out some wheels that

nad stuck fast. At some places there had been a wholesale robbery of rails, which had been thrown into a gap of this kind in the road, till it was practicable for travellers or wagons. After a time we had to bid adieu to the comforts of a coach and betake ourselves to a great open wagon — a mere strong box, set on four wheels, with pieces of plank laid across the top for seats. In this affair — some ten feet long and about four broad — we went through some of the worst stages. But, beyond Hamilton, we got back our coach again, and for a time went on smoothly enough, till we reached a swamp, which had to be crossed on a road made of trees cut into lengths and laid side by side, their ends resting on the trunks of others placed lengthwise. You may think how smooth it would be, with each log a different size from the one next it — a great patriarch of the woods rising high between "babes" half its thickness. The whole fabric had, moreover, sunk pretty nearly to the level of the water, and the alder bushes every here and there overhung the edges. As we reached it late at night, and there was neither moon nor stars, and a yard too much either way would have sent coach and all into the water, men had to be got from the nearest house to go at the horses' heads with lanterns, and the passengers were politely requested to get out, and stumble on behind as they could, except two ladies, who were allowed to stay and be battered up and down inside, instead of

having to sprawl on in the dark with us. This was my first experience of "corduroy roads," but we had several more stretches of them before we got to our journey's end. I have long ago learned all the varieties of badness of which roads are capable, and questions whether "corduroy" is entitled to the first rank. There is a kind made of thick planks, laid side by side, which, when they get old and broken, may bid fair for the palm. I have seen a stout, elderly lady, when the coach was at a good trot, bumped fairly against the roof by a sudden hole and the shock against the plank at the other side. But, indeed, "corduroy" is dreadful. When we came to it I tried every thing to save my poor bones — sitting on my hands, or raising my body on them — but it was of little use; on we went, thump, thump, thumping against one log after another, and this, in the last part of our journey, with the bare boards of an open wagon for seats once more. It was bad enough in the coach with stuffed seats, but it was awful on the hard wood. But we got through without an actual upset or breakdown, which is more than a friend of mine could say, for the coach in which he was went into so deep a mud-hole at one part of the road, that it fairly overturned, throwing the passengers on the top of one another inside, and leaving them no way of exit, when they came to themselves, but to crawl out through the window. It was fine weather, however, and the leaves were making the

woods beautiful, and the birds had begun to flit about, so that the cheerfulness of nature kept us from thinking much of our troubles. It took us three days to go a hundred and fifty miles, and we stopped on the way besides for my brother's business, so that the rest of our party had reached our new home, by their route, before us.

The look of the house which was to be our dwelling was novel enough to me, with my old ideas about houses still in my head. It was built a little back from the river, far enough to give room for a garden when we had time to make one; and the trees had been cut down from the water's edge to some distance behind the house, to make things a little more cheery, and also to prevent the risk of any of them falling on our establishment in a high wind. The house itself had, in fact, been built of the logs procured by felling these patriarchs of the forest, every one of which had, as usual on Canadian farms, been cut down. My brother had left special instructions to spare some of the smaller ones, but the "chopper" had understood him exactly the wrong way, and had cut down those pointed out with especial zeal as the objects of his greatest dislike. Building the house must have been very heavy work, for it was made of great logs, the whole thickness of the trees, piled one on another, a story and a half high. The neighbors had made what they call a "bee" to help to "raise" it — that is, they had come without expecting

wages, but with the understanding that each would get back from us, when he wanted it, as many days' labor as he had given. They manage a difficult business like that of getting up the outside of a log house, more easily than one would think. First, the logs are cut into the proper lengths for the sides and the ends; then they are notched at the end to make them keep together; then an equal number are put at the four sides to be ready, and the first stage is over. The next step is to get four laid in the proper positions on the ground, and then to get up the rest, layer by layer, on the top of each other, till the whole are in their places. It is a terrible strain on the men, for there is nothing but sheer strength to help them, except that they put poles from the top of the last log raised, to the ground, and then, with handspokes, force another up the slope to its destined position. I have known many men terribly wrenched by the handspoke of some other one slipping and letting the whole weight of one end come upon the person next him. The logs at the front and back were all fully twenty feet long, and some of them eighteen inches thick, so that you may judge their weight. After the square frame had been thus piled up, windows and a door were cut with axes, a board at the sides of each keeping the ends of the logs in their places. You may wonder how this could be done, but backwoodsmen are so skilful with the axe that it was done very neatly. The sashes for the windows

and the planking for different parts of the house were got from a saw-mill some distance off, across the river, and my brother put in the glass. Of course there were a great many chinks between the logs, but these were filled up, as well as possible, with billets and chips of wood, the whole being finally coated and made air-tight with mortar. Thus the logs looked as if built up with lime, the great black trunks of the trees alternating with the grey belts between. The frame of the roof was made of round poles, flattened on the top, on which boards were put, and these again were covered with shingles — a kind of wooden slate made of split pine, which answers very well. The angles at the ends were filled up with logs fitted to the length, and fixed in their places by wooden pins driven through the roof-pole at each corner. On the whole house there were no nails used at all, except on the roof. Wooden pins, and an auger to make holes, made every thing fast. Inside, it was an extraordinary place. The floor was paved with pine slabs, the outer planks cut from logs, with the round side down, and fixed by wooden pins to sleepers made of thin young trees, cut the right lengths. Overhead, a number of similar round poles, about the thickness of a man's leg, supported the floor of the upper story, which was to be my sisters' bedroom. They had planks, however, instead of boards, in honor of their sex, perhaps. They had to climb to this paradise by an extraor-

dinary ladder, made with the never-failing axe and auger, out of green, round wood. I used always to think of Robinson Crusoe getting into his fortification, when I saw them going up.

The chimney was a wonderful affair. It was large enough to let you walk up most of the way, and could hold, I can't tell how many logs, four or five feet long, for a fire. It was built of mud, and when whitewashed looked very well — at least we came to like it; it was so clean and cheerful in the winter time. But we had to pull it down some years after, and get one built of brick, as it was always getting out of repair. A partition was put up across the middle and then divided again, and this made two bedrooms for my brothers, and left us our solitary room, which was to serve for kitchen, dining-room, and drawing-room, the outer door opening into it. As to paint, it was out of the question, but we had lime for whitewash, and what with it and some newspapers my brothers pasted up in their bedrooms, and a few pictures we brought from home, we thought we were quite stylish. There was no house any better, at any rate, in the neighborhood, and I suppose we judged by that.

To keep out the rain and the cold — for rats were not known on the river for some years after — the whole of the bottom log outside had to be banked up after our arrival, the earth being dug up all round and thrown against it. The miserable shanties in which some settlers manage to live for

a time are half buried by this process, and the very wretched ones built by laborers alongside public works while making, look more like natural mounds than human habitations. I have often thought it was a curious thing to see how people, when in the same or nearly the same circumstances, fall upon similar plans. Some of the Indians in America, for instance, used to sink a pit for a house, and build it round with stones, putting a roof on the walls, which reached only a little above the ground; and antiquarians tell us that the early Scotch did the very same. Then Xenophon, long ago, and Curzon, in our day, tell us how they were often like to fall through the roof of the houses in Armenia into the middle of the family, huddled up, with their oxen, beneath, their dwellings being burrowed into the side of a slope, and showing no signs of their presence from above. But our house was not like this, I am happy to say; it was *on* the ground, not *in* it, and was very warm for Canada, when the wind did not come against the door, which was a very poor one of inch-thick wood. The thickness of the logs kept out the cold wonderfully, though that is a very ambiguous word for a Canadian house, which would need to be made two logs thick to be warm without tremendous fires — at least, in the open unsheltered country. The houses made of what they call "clap-boards" — that is, of narrow boards three-quarters of an inch thick, and lathed and plastered inside — are very much colder; in-

deed, they are, in my opinion, awful, in any part of them where a fire is not kept up all winter.

One thing struck me very much, that locks and bolts seemed to be thought very useless things. Most of the doors had only wooden latches, made with an axe or a knife, and fastened at night by a wooden pin stuck in above the bar. We got water from the river close at hand; a plank run out into the stream forming what they called "a wharf," to let us get depth enough for our pitchers and pails.

Besides the house, my brother had got a barn built not far from the house — of course a log one — on the piece clear of trees. It was about the size of the house, but the chinks between the logs were not so carefully filled up as in it. The squirrels, indeed, soon found this out, and were constantly running in and out when we had any grain in it. The upper part was to hold our hay, and half of the ground floor was for our other crops, the cows having the remainder for their habitation. We bought a yoke of oxen — that is, two — a few days after our arrival, and we began with two cows, one of them a pretty fair milker, but the other, which had been bought at an extra price, was chosen by Robert for its fine red skin, and never had given much milk, and never did. The oxen, great unwieldy brutes, were pretty well broken; but they were so different from any thing we had ever seen for ploughing or drawing a wagon, that we were all rather afraid of their horns at

first, and not very fond of having any thing to do with them. We had bought a plough and harrows, and I don't know what else, before coming up, and had brought a great many things besides from England, so that we had a pretty fair beginning in farm implements. An ox-wagon was very soon added to our purchases — a rough affair as could be. It was nothing but two planks for the bottom and one for each side, with short pieces at the ends, like the wagon-stage, on the road from Toronto — a long box on four wheels, about the height of a cart. The boards were quite loose, to let them rise and fall in going over the roads when they were bad. The oxen were fastened to this machine by a yoke, which is a heavy piece of hard wood, with a hollow at each end for the back of the necks of the oxen, and an iron ring in the middle, on the under side, to slip over a pin at the end of the wagon-pole, the oxen being secured to it by two thin collars of a tough wood called hickory, which were just pieces bent to fit their deep necks, the ends being pushed up through two holes in the yokes at each side, and fastened by pins at the top. There was no harness of any kind, and no reins, a long wand serving to guide them. I used at first to think it was a very brave thing to put the yoke on or take it off.

The names of our two were Elephant and Buckeye, the one, as his name showed, a great creature, but as lazy as he was huge; the other, a much nicer beast, somewhat smaller, and a far better

worker. They were both red and white, and so patient and quiet, that I used to be ashamed of myself when I got angry at them for their solemn slowness and stupidity. Had we been judges of cattle we might have got much better ones for the money they cost us; but my brother Andrew, who bought them, had never had any more to do with oxen till then than to help to eat them at dinner. However, we never bought any thing more from the man who sold us them.

Our first concern, when we had got fairly into the house, was to help to get the furniture and luggage brought from the wharf, two miles off, for we had to leave every thing except our bedding there on landing. It was a great job to get all into the wagon, and then to open it after reaching the house. The wharf was a long wooden structure, built of logs driven into the shallow bed of the river for perhaps a hundred yards out to the deep water, and planked over. There was a broad place at the end to turn a wagon, but so much of it was heaped up with what they called "cordwood"— that is, wood for fuel, cut four feet long — that it took some management to get this done. A man whom we had hired as servant of all work, at two pounds and his board and lodging a month, brought down the wagon, and I shall never forget how we laughed at his shouting and roaring all the way to the oxen, as he walked at their heads with a long beech wand in his hand. He never ceased bellowing at them

in rough, angry names, except to vary them by orders, such as Haw! Gee! Whoa! Hup! which were very ridiculous when roared at their ears loud enough to have let them know his wishes if they had been on the other side of the river. Somehow, every one who drives oxen in Canada seems to have got into the same plan; we ourselves, indeed, fell into it more than I would have thought, after a time. When we had begun to move the luggage, what boxes on boxes had to be lifted! We all lent a hand, but it was hard work. There was the piano, and the eight-day clock, in a box like a coffin, and carpets, and a huge wardrobe, packed full of I don't know what, large enough to have done for a travelling show, and boxes of books, and crockery, and tables, and a great carpenter's chest, not to speak of barrels of oatmeal, and flour, and salt, and one of split peas. I think the books were the heaviest, except that awful wardrobe and chest of drawers, which were packed full of something. But they paid over and over for all the trouble and weight, proving the greatest possible blessing. If we had not brought them we would have turned half savages, I suppose, for there were none to buy nearer than eighty or ninety miles, and besides, we would not have had money to buy them. We had a whole set of Sir Walter Scott's charming stories, which did us a world of good both by helping us to spend the winter evenings pleasantly, by the great amount of instruction in

history and antiquarian lore they contained and by showing my young sisters, especially, that all the world were not like the rude people about us. They got a taste for elegance and refinement from them that kept them ladies in their feelings while they had only the life of servants.

When we had got all the things into the house, the next thing was to unpack them. A large pier-glass, which would have been very useful, but rather out of the way in such a house, was discovered to be shivered to fragments; and some crockery had found the shaking on the journey too much for its powers of resistance. That horrid wardrobe, which had sprained our backs to get on the wagon, would barely go in at the door, and we were very much afraid at first, that, after bringing it more than three thousand miles, we should have to roof it over, cut holes in it, and make it a hen-house. It was all but too large, like the picture in the "Vicar of Wakefield," which would not go in at any door when it was brought home. There was not room for nearly all our furniture, and one end of my sister's loft was packed like a broker's store-room with part of it. My brothers being in America before, had however saved us from bringing as outrageous things as some who afterwards settled in the neighborhood. I remember one family who brought ever so many huge heavy grates, not knowing that there was no coal in Canada, and that they were useless. They would, indeed, be able to

get Ohio coal now, in the larger towns; but there was none then anywhere. The only fuel burned all through the country parts, in fireplaces, is, still, great thick pieces of split logs, four feet long. One settler from Ireland had heard that there were a great many rattlesnakes in Canada; and as he had been a cavalry volunteer, and had the accoutrements, he brought a brass helmet, a regulation sabre, buckskin breeches, and jack-boots with him, that he might march safely through the jungle which he supposed he should find on his route. The young clergyman who afterwards came out had a different fear. He thought there might be no houses for him to sleep in at nights, and brought out a hammock to swing up under the trees. What he thought the people to whom he was to preach lived in, I don't know; perhaps he fancied we cooked our dinners under the trees, and lived without houses, like the Indians. In some countries, hammocks are used in travelling through uninhabited places, on account of the poisonous insects on the ground and the thickness of the vegetation; but in Canada such a thing is never heard of, houses being always within reach in the parts at all settled; and travellers sleep on the ground when beyond the limits of civilization. But to sleep in the open air at all makes one such a figure before morning with mosquito-bites, that nobody would try it a second time, if he could help it. I was once on a journey up Lake Huron, of which I shall

speak by and by, where we had to sleep a night on the ground, and, what with ants running over us, and with the mosquitoes, we had a most wretched time of it. A friend who was with me had his nose so bitten that it was thicker above than below, and looked exactly as if it had been turned upside down in the dark.

It took us some time to get every thing fairly in order, but it was all done after a while. We were all in good health; every thing before us was new; and the weather, though very warm, was often delightful in the evening. Through the day it was sometimes very oppressive, and we had hot nights now and then that were still worse. A sheet seemed as heavy as if it had been a pair of blankets, and when we were sure the door was fast, we were glad to throw even it aside. We always took a long rest at noon till the sun got somewhat cooler, but the heat was bad enough even in the shade. I have known it pretty nearly, if not quite, 100° some days in the house. I remember hearing some old gentlemen once talking about it, and telling each other how they did to escape it: the one declared that the coolest part of the house was below the bed, and the other, a very stout clergyman, said he found the only spot for study was in the cellar. Captain W—— used to assert that it was often as hot in Canada as in the West Indies.

My sisters never went with so little clothing before; and, indeed, it was astonishing how their

circumference collapsed under the influence of the sun. As to us, we thought only of coolness. Coarse straw hats, with broad brims, costing about eightpence apiece, with a handkerchief in the crown to keep the heat off the head; a shirt of blue cotton, wide trowsers of dark printed calico, or, indeed, of any thing thin, and boots, composed our dress. But this was elaborate, compared with that adopted by a gentleman who was leading a batchelor life back in the bush some distance from us. A friend went to see him one day, and found him frying some bacon on a fire below a tree before his door; — a potato-pot hanging by a chain over part of it, from a bough — his only dress being a shirt, boots, a hat, and a belt round his waist, with a knife in it. He had not thought of any one penetrating to his wilderness habitation, and laughed as heartily at being caught in such a plight as my friend did at catching him. For my part, I thought I should be cooler still if I turned up my shirt-sleeves; but my arms got forthwith so tanned and freckled, that even yet they are more useful than beautiful. One day there chanced to be a torn place on my shoulder, which I did not notice on going out. I thought, after a time, that it was very hot, but took it for granted it could not be helped. When I came in at dinner, however, I was by no means agreeably surprised when my sister Margaret called out to me, "George, there's a great blister on your shoulder," which sure enough there was. I took care to have always a whole shirt after that.

We had hardly been a month on the river when we heard that a man, fresh from England, who had been at work for a neighbor, came into the house one afternoon, saying he had a headache, and died, poor fellow, in less than an hour. He had a sun-stroke. Sometimes those who are thus seized fall down at once in a fit of apoplexy, as was the case with Sir Charles Napier in Scinde. I knew a singular instance of what the sun sometimes does, in the case of a young man, a plumber by trade, who had been working on a roof in one of the towns on a hot day. He was struck down in an instant, and was only saved from death by a fellow-workman. For a time he lost his reason, but that gradually came back. He lost the power of every part of his body, however, except his head, nothing remaining alive, you may say, but that. He could move or control his eyes, mouth, and neck, but that was all. He had been a strong man, but he wasted away till his legs and arms were not thicker than a child's. Yet he got much better eventually, after being bedridden for several years, and when I last was at his house, could creep about on two crutches.

I used to pity my sisters, who had to work over the fire, cooking for us. It was bad enough for girls who had just left a fashionable school in England, and were quite young yet, to do work which hitherto they had always had done for them, but to have to stoop over a fire in scorching hot weather must have been very exhausting. They had to

bake in a large iron pot, set upon embers, and covered with them over the lid; and the dinner had to be cooked on the logs in the kitchen fireplace, until we thought of setting up a contrivance made by laying a stout stick on two upright forked ones, driven into the ground at each end of a fire kindled outside, and hanging the pots from it. While I think of it, what a source of annoyance the cooking on the logs in the fireplace was before we got a crane! I remember we once had a large brass panful of raspberry jam, nicely poised, as we thought, on the burning logs, and just ready to be lifted off, when, lo! some of the firewood below gave way and down it went into the ashes! Baking was a hard art to learn. What bread we had to eat at first! We used to quote Hood's lines —

> "Who has not heard of home-made bread —
> That heavy compound of putty and lead?"

But practice, and a few lessons from a neighbor's wife, made my sisters quite expert at it. We had some trouble in getting flour, however, after our first stock ran out. The mill was five miles off, and, as we had only oxen, it was a tedious job getting to it and back again. One of my brothers used to set off at five in the morning, with his breakfast over, and was not back again till nine or ten at night — that is, after we had wheat of our own. It had to be ground while he waited. But it was not all lost time, for the shoemaker's was

near the mill, and we always made the same journey do for both. In winter we were sometimes badly off when our flour ran short. On getting to the mill, we, at times, found the wheel frozen hard, and that the miller had no flour of his own to sell. I have known us for a fortnight having to use potatoes instead of bread, when our neighbors happened to be as ill provided as we, and could not lend us a "baking."

But baking was not all that had to be done in a house like ours, with so many men in it. No servants could be had; the girls round, even when their fathers had been laborers in England, were quite above going out to service, so that my sisters had their hands full. We tried to help them as much as we could, bringing in the wood for the fire, and carrying all the water from the river. Indeed, I used to think it almost a pleasure to fetch the water, the river was so beautifully clear. Never was crystal more transparent. I was wont to idle as well as work while thus employed, looking at the beautiful stones and pebbles that lay at the bottom, far beyond the end of the plank that served for our "wharf."

CHAPTER III.

Clearing the land. — David's bragging, and the end of it. — **Burning** the log-heaps. — Our logging bee. — What prejudice can do. — Our fences and crops nearly burned. — The woods on fire. — Building a snake fence. — "Shingle" pigs give us sore trouble. — "Breachy" horses and cattle.

THE first thing that had to be done with the land was to make a farm of it, by cutting down and burning as many trees as we could by the first of August, to have some room for sowing wheat in the first or second week of September. It was now well on in June, so that we had very little time. However, by hiring two men to chop (we didn't board or lodge them) and setting our other hired man to help, and with the addition of what my brothers Robert and David could do, we expected to get a tolerably-sized field ready. Henry and I were too young to be of much use; Henry, the elder, being only about fifteen. As to Andrew, he could not bear such work, and paid one of the men to work for him. Yet both he and we had all quite enough to do, in the lighter parts of the business. We had got axes in Toronto, and our man fitted them into the crooked handles which they

use in Canada. A British axe, with a long, thin blade, only set the men a laughing; and, indeed, it chanced to be a very poor affair, for one day the whole face of it flew off as Robert was making a furious cut with it at a thistle. The Canadian axes were shaped like wedges, and it was wonderful to see how the men made the chips fly out of a tree with them. We got up in the morning with the sun, and went out to work till breakfast, the men whacking away with all their might; Nisbet, our own man, as we called him, snorting at every stroke, as if that helped him, and my two elder brothers using their axes as well as they could. We, younger hands, had, for our part, to lop off the branches when the trees were felled. My brothers soon got to be very fair choppers, and could finish a pretty thick tree sooner than you would suppose. But it was hard work, for some of the trees were very large. One in particular, an elm, which the two men attacked at the same time, was so broad across the stump, after it was cut down, that Nisbet, who was a fair-sized man, when he lay down across it, with his head at the edge on one side, did not reach with his feet to the other. But, thicker or thinner, all came down as we advanced. The plan was to make, first, a slanting stroke, and then another, straight in, to cut off the chip thus made; thus gradually reaching the middle, leaving a smooth, flat stump about three feet high underneath, and a slope inwards above. The one side done, they began the

same process with the other, hacking away chip after chip from the butt, till there was not enough left to support the mass above. Then came the signal of the approaching fall by a loud crack of the thin strip that was left uncut; on hearing which, we looked up to see which way the huge shaft was coming, and would take to our heels out of its reach, if it threatened to fall in our direction. It is wonderful, however, how exactly a skilful chopper can determine beforehand how a tree shall come down. They sometimes manage, indeed, to aim one so fairly at a smaller one, close at hand, as to send it, also, to the ground with the blow. Accidents rarely happen, though, sometimes, a poor man runs the wrong way and gets killed. What a noise the great monarchs of the forest made as they thundered down! It was like firing off a great cannon; and right glad we were when we had a good many such artillery to fire off in a day. But it was often dreadfully hot work, and my brothers seemed as if they should never drink enough. I used to bring them a small pailful of water at a time, and put it on the shady side of a stump, covering it over with some green thing besides, to keep it cool. The cows and oxen seemed to take as much pleasure as ourselves in our progress, for no sooner was a tree down than they would be among its branches, munching off the tender ends as if they were great delicacies in their eyes. It was harder to keep them out of harm's way than ourselves, and many a time

I was half afraid a tree would be down on me before I got them out of danger. Indeed, we had one loss, though only a small one. We had been talking over night about cattle being killed, and David, who was always a great brag, had told us that "he thought it all stupidity; he didn't know how people killed beasts; he could chop for years and never hurt any thing, if there were ever so many cattle about." Next morning, however, before breakfast, we were all hard at work, and the oxen and the cows were busy with the twigs as usual, when a fine little calf we had got with one of the cows, wandered off in David's direction, just as a tree he was at was about to fall; and, presently, while he was all excitement about its going the right way for himself, it was down smash on the poor calf, which was, of course, gone in a moment. We were sorry for the unfortunate little creature, but we could not help laughing amidst all at the face David put on. "It was very singular — very. He couldn't account for it; how could he think a calf would leave its mother?" But he said no more about the stupidity of people who killed oxen or cows while chopping.

Working hard every day, it was surprising what a piece we soon felled. When we had got as much down as we thought we could clear off in time for the wheat, we gave the rest a respite for awhile, and set to getting rid of those we had already overthrown. The straightest of them were selected for

rails, with which to fence our intended field; all the others were to be remorselessly burned, stock and branch. The first step toward this had been taken already, by us lads having cut off the branches from each tree as it was felled, and heaped them together in different spots. The trunks of the trees had next to be cut into pieces about ten feet long, those intended for rails being left somewhat longer. I wonder how often the axes rose and fell during these weeks. Even my brothers began to be able to use them more skilfully, their stumps beginning to look smooth and clean cut, instead of being hacked in a thousand ridges, as at first. How an English carpenter's heart would have grieved over the destruction of so much splendid wood! The finest black walnut, and oak, and maple, was slashed at from morning to night, with no thought on our parts but to get it out of the way as quickly as possible.

Every thing was, at last, ready for the grand finishing act, but that required the help of some neighbors, so that we had to call another "bee." The logs had to be rolled together and piled up for burning, which would have taken us too long if left to ourselves alone. We got a good woman from a farm not far off to come in to help my sisters in their preparations, for there is always a great deal of cooking on these occasions. Salt beef and sal pork were to form the centre dishes at the dinner, but there was to be a great array of pies and tarts

for which we bought part of the fruit across the river and, of the rest, there were pumpkins, which we got from settlers near at hand, and we had plums enough, very good though wild, from trees in our own bush. Tea, with cream to every one's taste, formed the principal beverage, though the most of the men wanted to get whisky besides. But it almost always leads to drunkenness and fighting, so that we did without it. On the day appointed there was a very good muster — perhaps twenty men altogether. They came immediately after breakfast, and we took care to be ready for them.

Our oxen were brought to the ground with their yoke on, and a long chain fastened to the ring in it, and two of the men brought each another yoke, so that we were noisy enough, and had plenty of excitement. Two men got it as their task to drive, others fixed the chains round the logs, and drew them as near each other as possible, in lots of about six or seven, and the rest had to lift each lot, one log on another, into piles. Henry and I were set to gather the loose brush that was left, and throw it on the top of the heaps, and thrust the dry rotten sticks lying about, into the holes between the logs, to help them to burn. It was astonishing to see how the oxen walked away with their loads. Standing as quiet as if they could not move, except when their tails were sent to do duty on some troublesome flies, their faces as solemnly stupid as possible, the first shout of the driver made them lean instantly

against their yoke in a steady pull, which moved almost any log to which they might be chained. Horses would have jumped and tugged, and the log would have stuck where it was, but the solid strain of the oxen, their two heads often together, and their bodies far apart, was irresistible. Off they walked with huge cuts of trees, ten feet long, as if they had been trifles. It was a wonder how they could stand dragging such heavy weights over the rough ground, with nothing but the thin wooden collar round their necks, against which to press. A horse needs a padded collar, but an ox doesn't seem to suffer for the want of it. In Nova Scotia, which I afterwards visited, and also in Lower Canada, oxen are harnessed by the horns, and you are only laughed at if you say that it seems cruel. I believe if they were yoked by the tail in any country, the people who use them in that way would stand up for its superiority to any other. Prejudice is a wonderful thing for blinding men. I have heard of a gentleman in the East Indies, who felt for the laborers having to carry the earth from some public work they were digging, in baskets, on their shoulders, and got a number of wheelbarrows made for them, showing them himself how to use them, and how much better they were than their own plan. But, next morning, when he came to see how they were liking the new system, what was his astonishment to find that they had turned the barrows also into baskets, carrying them on their shoulders, with a man at each handle and one at the wheel!

With a due rest for dinner and supper, an extra time being taken in the middle of the day to escape the heat, and with a wonderful consumption of eatables, including beef and pork, pies, tarts, pickles, puddings, cakes, tea, and other things, at each meal, we got through the day to the satisfaction of all, and had now only to get every thing burned off.

The next day it was slightly windy, which was in our favor, and, still better, the wind was blowing away from our house and barn. The burning was as thorough as we could have desired, but it was hot work. We brought some wood embers from the house, and laid them on the top of one of the logs, on the side next the wind. Then we piled chips and splinters on them, which were soon in flames, and from them there soon was a grand blaze of the whole pile. Thus we went on, from one to another, until they were all a-fire. But the rolling the pieces together as they burned away, and the stuffing odd ends into the hollows to keep up the flame, was wild work. We ran about all day, gathering up every bit of branch or dead wood we could find, to get a clean sweep made of every thing at once. What we were like when all was over, with our black faces and hands, and smudged shirts and trowsers, may be easily fancied. But, after all, one day was not enough to get rid of the whole. It was days before we got every thing burned, the last pile being made up of the fragments of all the rest that still remained.

We were fortunate in not having any thing set on fire which we wished to keep from being burned. I have known of many cases where dried leaves and pieces of dead wood, and the thick roots of the grass, and the coat of vegetable matter always found in the soil of the forest, kindled, in spite of every effort to prevent it, the fire running along, far and near, in the ground, and setting every thing it reached in a blaze. I remember, some years after our arrival, Henry was one day going some distance, and thought it would be as well, before he started, to fire some brush heaps that were standing in a field that was being cleared, quite a distance back, along the side road; but he had hardly done so and set off, than my sisters, Margaret and Eliza, who were alone in the house, noticed that the fire had caught the ground, and was making for the strip at the side of the road, in the direction of the wheat field. It was leaping from one thing to another, as the wind carried it, and had already put the long fence next it, running along six or seven acres, in great danger. If it had once kindled that, it might have swept on toward the house and barn and burned up every thing we had; but my sisters were too thorough Canadians by this time to let it have its own way. Off the two set to the burning bank, and began to take down the fence rail by rail, and carry each across the road, where the fire could not reach them. Fortunately there was only stubble in the field,

and the black ploughed earth checked the fire, but it kept running along the road, breaking out afresh after they had thought it was done, and keeping them fighting with the rails the whole day, until Henry came back at night. A man, who passed in a wagon when they were in the worst of their trouble, never offered them any help, poor girls, but drove on, "guessing" they "had a pretty tight job thar." Thanks to their activity there was no mischief done except the taking down the fence; but it was a wonder it did not hurt my sisters, as the rails are so heavy that men never lift more than one at a time, or very seldom.

Another instance occurred about the same time, but on a larger scale. One day on looking east from the house, we noticed, about two miles off, great clouds of smoke rising from the woods, and of course we were instantly off to see what it was. We found that ground-fire had got into a piece of the forest which we call the "Windfall," a broad belt of huge pine trees, which had been thrown down by some terrible whirlwind, I don't know how long before. Some of them had already mouldered in parts; others had been charred by some former burning, and would have lasted for almost any length of time. They lay on each other in the wildest and thickest confusion, making a barricade that would have kept back an army of giants, and reaching for miles, their great branches rising in thousands, black and naked, into the air.

The fire had fairly caught them, and was leaping and crackling from limb to limb, and sending up volumes of the densest smoke. It was a terrible sight to see, and no one could tell how far it would extend. We were afraid it would spread to the forest at each side, and it did catch many of the trees next it, fixing on them, sometimes at the ground, sometimes up among the branches, while, sometimes, the first indication of their being on fire would be by the dead part at the very top, nearly a hundred feet, I should think, in some cases, from the earth, flaming out like a star. At night the sight was grand in the extreme — the blazing mass of prostrate trees in the Windfall, and at its edges, tongues of flame, running up the huge trunks, or breaking out here and there on their sides. At one place a field came very near the path of the conflagration, and it was feared that, though the trees did not come close enough to set the fence on fire by contact, it might be kindled by the burning twigs and inflammable matter that covered the ground. A plough was therefore brought, and several broad furrows were run outside, that the ground-fire might thus be stopped. The plan was effectual, and the fence remained untouched; but the fire among the dead pines spread day after day, till it had burned up every thing before it, to an opening in the forest on the other side, where it at last died out.

As soon as the log-piles had been fairly disposed

of, we had, for our next job, to get the rails put up round the field thus cleared. They were made, from the logs that had been saved for the purpose, by one of the choppers, whom we retained. First of all, he sank his axe into one end of the log, and then he put an iron or wooden wedge into the cleft he had made, and drove it home with a mallet. Then, into the crack made by the first wedge, he put a second, and that made it split so far down that only another was generally needed to send it in two. The same process was gone through with the halves, and then with the parts, until the whole log lay split into pieces, varying in thickness from that of a man's leg, as much again, as they were wanted light or heavy. You must remember that they were twelve feet long. To make them into a fence, you laid a line of them down on the ground in a zigzag, like a row of very broad V's, the end of the second resting on that of the first, and so on, round the corners, till you came to within the length of a rail from where you started. The vacant space was to be the entrance to the field. Then five or six more were laid, one on another, all round, in the same way — or rather, were put up in short, complete portions, till all were in their places. The ends, at each side of the entrance, were next lifted and laid on pins put between two upright posts at each side. To make a gate, we had a second set of posts, with pins, close to the others, and on these pins rails were laid, which

could be taken out when wanted, and served very well for a gate, but we boys almost always went over the fence rather than go round to it. To keep all the rails in their places, we had to put up what they called "stakes" at each angle — that is, we had to take shorter rails, sharpened a little at the end, and push one hard into the ground on each side of the fence, at every overlapping of the ends of the rails, leaning them firmly against the top rail, so that they crossed each other above. The last thing was to lay a light rail all round into the crosses thus made, so as to "lock" them, and to make the whole so high that no beast could get over it.

We used to laugh about what we were told of the pigs and cattle and horses getting through and over fences; but we soon found out that it was no laughing matter. The pigs were our first enemies, for, though we had made the lowest four rails very close, as we thought, to keep them out, we found we had not quite succeeded. There were some of a horrible breed, which they called the "shingle pig," as thin as a slate, with long snouts, long coarse bristles, long legs, and a belly like a greyhound — creatures about as different from an English pig as can be imagined. They could run like a horse, nothing would fatten them, and they could squeeze themselves sideways through an opening where you would have thought they could never have got in. If any hollow in the ground gave them the clance

of getting below the rails, they were sure to find it out, and the first thing you would see, perhaps, would be a great gaunt skeleton of a sow, with six or eight little ones, rooting away in the heart of your field. With old fences they made short work, for if there were a piece low and rickety, they would fairly push it over with their horrid long noses, and enter with a triumphant grunt. Although they might have spared our feelings, and left our first little field alone, they did not, but never rested snuffing round the fence, till they found out a place or two below it that had not been closely enough staked, through which they squeezed themselves almost every day, until we found out where they were and stopped them up. The brutes were so cunning that they would never go in before you, but would stand looking round the end of the fence with their wicked eyes till you were gone. Robert thought at first he could take revenge on them, and whip them out of such annoying habits, and whenever the cry was given that "the pigs were in," if he were within reach he would rush for the whip, and over the fence, to give them the weight of it. But they were better at running than he was, and, though he cut off the corners to try to head them, I don't know, that in all the times he ran himself out of breath, he ever did more than make them wonder what his intention could be in giving them such dreadful chases. We learned to be wiser after a time, and by keeping down our ill-

nature and driving them gently, found they would make for the place where they got in, and, by going out at it, discover it to us. I only once saw a pig run down, and it wasn't a "shingle" one. Neither Robert, nor any of us — for we were all, by his orders, tearing after it in different directions — could come near it; but a man we had at the time started off like an arrow in pursuit, and very soon had it by the hind leg, lifting it by which, the same instant, to poor piggy's great astonishment, he sent it with a great heave over the fence, down on the grass outside. It was a small one, of course, else he could not have done it. A gentleman some miles above us used to be terribly annoyed by all the pigs of the neighborhood, as he declared, getting round the end of his fence which ran into the river, and thought he would cure matters by running it out a rail further. But they were not to be beaten, and would come to the outside, and swim round his fancied protection. He had to add a third length of rail before he stopped them, and it succeeded only by the speed of the current being too great for them to stem.

But pigs were not the only nuisance. Horses and cattle were sometimes a dreadful trouble. A "breachy" horse, or ox, or cow — that is, one given to leap fences or break them down — is sure to lead all the others in the neighborhood into all kinds of mischief. The gentleman who was so worried by the nautical powers of the pigs, used to be

half distracted by a black mare, which ran loose in his neighborhood, and led the way into his fields to a whole troop of horses, which, but for her, would have been harmless enough. If a fence were weak she would shove it over; or if firm, unless it were very high indeed, she would leap over it, generally knocking off rails enough in doing so to let the others in. She took a fancy to a fine field of Indian corn he had a little way from his house, and night after night, when he had fairly got into bed, he would hear her crashing over the fence into it, followed by all the rest. Of course he had to get up and dress himself, and then, after running about half an hour, through dewy corn as high as his head, to get them out again, he had to begin in the middle of the night to rebuild his broken rampart. Only think of this, repeated night after night. I used to laugh at his nine or ten feet high fence, which I had to climb every time I went along the river side to see him, but he always put me off by saying — "Ah, you haven't a black mare down your way." And I am happy to say we had not.

The cattle were no less accomplished in all forms of field-breaking villany than the pigs and horses. We had one brute of a cow, sometime after we came, that used deliberately to hook off the rails with her horns, until they were low enough to let her get her forelegs over, and then she leaned heavily on the rest until they gave way before her, after which she would boldly march in She was an excellent

milker, so that we did all we could to cure her — sticking a board on her horns, aud hanging another over her eyes — but she had a decided taste for fence-breaking, and we had at last to sentence her to death, and take our revenge by eating her up, through the winter, after she had been fattened.

CHAPTER IV.

We begin our preparations for sowing. — Gadflies. — Mosquitoes. — Harrowing experiences. — A huge fly. — Sandflies. — The poison of insects and serpents. — Winter wheat. — The wonders of plant-life. — Our first "sport." — Woodpeckers. — "Chitmunks." — The blue jay. — The blue bird. — The flight of birds.

WHEN we had got our piece of ground all cleared, except the great ugly stumps, and had got our fence up, our next job was to get every thing ready for sowing. First of all the ashes had to be scattered, a process that liberally dusted our clothes and faces. Then we brought up the oxen, and fastened them by their chain to the sharp end of a three-cornered harrow, and with this we had to scratch the soil, as if just to call its attention to what we wished at its hand. It was the most solemnly slow work I ever saw, to get over the ground with our yoke — solemn to all but the driver, but to him the very reverse. The shouting and yelling on his part never stopped, as he had to get them round this stump and clear of that one. But, if you looked only at the oxen, you forgot the noise, in watching whether they moved at all or not. Elephant would lift his great leg into the air and keep it motionless for a time, as if he were thinking whether he should

ever set it down again, and, of course, Buckeye could not get on faster than his mate. I tried the harrowing a little, but I confess I didn't like it. We were persecuted by the gadflies, which lighted on the poor oxen and kept them in constant excitement, as, indeed, they well might. Wherever they get a chance they pierce the skin on the back with a sharp tube, which shuts up and draws out like a telescope, at the end of their body, protruding an egg through it into the creature attacked, and this egg, when hatched, produces a grub, which makes a sore lump round it, and lives in it till it has attained its full size, when it comes out, lets itself fall to the ground and burrows in it, reappearing after a time as a winged gadfly, to torment other cattle. Then there were the long tough roots running in every direction round the stumps, and catching the teeth of the harrow every little while, giving the necks of the poor oxen uncommon jerks, and needing the harrow to be lifted over them each time. There was another trouble also, in the shape of the mosquitoes, which worried driver and oxen alike. They are tiny creatures, but they are nevertheless a great nuisance. In the woods in summer, or near them, or, indeed, wherever there is stagnant water, they are sure to sound their "airy trump." The wonderful quickness of the vibration of their wings makes a singing noise, which proclaims at once the presence of even a single tormentor. They rise in clouds from every pool, and even from the rain-

water barrels kept near houses, where they may be seen in myriads, in their first shape after leaving the egg, as little black creatures with large heads, and tails perpetually in motion, sculling themselves with great speed hither and thither, but always tail foremost. A single night is sufficient to change them from this state, and send them out as full-blown mosquitoes, so that even if there be not one in your room on going to bed, you may have the pleasure of hearing several before morning, if you are in the habit of indulging in the luxury of washing in rain-water, or, worse still, to find your nose, and cheeks, or hands, ornamented with itchy lumps, which show that the enemy has been at you, after all, while you slept. In Canada they are not half an inch long, and, until distended by blood, are so thin as to be nearly invisible. Their instrument of torture is a delicate sucker, sticking down from the head and looking very like a glass thread, the end of it furnished with sharp edges which cut the skin. I have sometimes let one take its will of the back of my hand, just to watch it. Down it comes, almost too light to be felt, then out goes the lancet, its sheath serving for support by bending up on the surface of the skin in proportion as the sucker sinks. A sharp prick and the little vampire is drinking your blood. A minute, and his thin, shrivelled body begins to get fuller, until, very soon, he is three times the mosquito he was when he began, and is quite red with his surfeit shining through his

sides. But, though he is done you are not, for some poisonous secretion is instilled into the puncture, which causes pain, inflammation, and swelling long after he is gone. We had a little smooth-haired terrier which seemed to please their taste almost as much as we ourselves did. When it got into the woods, they would settle on the poor brute, in spite of all its efforts, till it was almost black with them. Horses and oxen get no rest from their attacks, and between them and the horse-flies I have seen the sides of the poor things running with blood. "Dey say ebery ting has some use," said a negro to me one day; "I wonder what de mosqueeter's good for?" So do I. A clergyman who once visited us declared that he thought they and all such pests were part of what is meant in the Bible by the power of the devil; but whether he was right or not is beyond me to settle. Perhaps they keep off fevers from animals by bleeding them as they do. But you know what Socrates said, that it was the highest attainment of wisdom to feel that we know nothing, so that, even if we can't tell why they are there, we may be sure, that, if we knew as much as we might, we should find that they served some wise purpose. At the same time I have often been right glad to think that the little nuisances must surely have short commons in the unsettled districts, where there are no people nor cattle to torment.

The harrowing was also my first special intro-

duction to the horse-flies — great horrid creatures that they are. They fastened on the oxen at every part, and stuck the five knives with which their proboscis is armed, deep into the flesh. They are as large as honey-bees, so that you may judge how much they torment their victims. I have seen them make a horse's flanks red with the blood from their bites. They were too numerous to be driven off by the long tails of either oxen or horses, and, to tell the truth, I was half afraid to come near them lest they should take a fancy to myself. It is common in travelling to put leafy branches of maple or some other tree over the horses' ears and head, to protect them as far as possible.

The largest fly I ever saw, lighted on the fence, close to me, about this time. We had been frightened by stories of things as big as your thumb, that soused down on you before you knew it, but I never, before or since, saw such a giant of a fly as this fellow. It was just like the house-fly magnified a great many times, how many I should not like to say. I took to my heels in a moment, for fear of instant death, and saw no more of it. Whether it would have bitten me or not I cannot tell, but I was not at all inclined to try the experiment.

All this time we have left the oxen pulling away at the harrow, but we must leave them a minute or two longer, till we get done with all the flies at once. There is a little black speck called the sand-fly,

which many think even worse than the mosquito. It comes in clouds, and is too small to ward off, and its bite causes acute pain for hours after. But, notwithstanding gadflies, mosquitoes, horse-flies, and this last pest, the sand-fly, we were better off than the South American Indians of whom Humboldt speaks, who have to hide all night three or four inches deep in the sand to keep themselves from mosquitoes as large as bluebottles; and our cattle had nothing to contend with like such a fly as the tzetse, which Dr. Livingstone tells us, is found in swarms on the South African rivers, a bite of which is certain death to any horse or ox.

How curious it is, by the way, that any poison should be so powerful that the quantity left by the bite of a fly should be able to kill a great strong horse or an ox; and how very wonderful it is, moreover, that the fly's body should secrete such a frightful poison, and that it should carry it about in it without itself suffering any harm! Dr. Buckland, of the Life Guards, was once poisoned by some of the venom of a cobra di capello, a kind of serpent, getting below his nail, into a scratch he had given himself with a knife he had used in skinning a rat, which the serpent had killed. And yet the serpent itself could have whole glands full of it, without getting any hurt. But if the cobra were to bite its own body it would die at once. The scorpion can and does sting itself to death.

When we had got our field harrowed over twice

or thrice, till every part of it had been well scratched up, and the ashes well mixed with the soil, our next step was to sow it, after which came another harrowing, and then we had only to wait till the harvest next July, hoping we might be favored with a good crop. That a blade so slight as that of young wheat should be able to stand the cold of the Canadian winter has always seemed to me a great wonder. It grows up the first year just like grass, and might be mistaken for it even in the beginning of the following spring. The snow which generally covers it during the long cold season is a great protection to it, but it survives even when it has been bare for long intervals together, though never, I believe, so strong, after such hardships suffered in its infancy. The snow not only protects, but, in its melting, nourishes, the young plant, so that not to have a good depth of it is a double evil. But, snow or not snow, the soil is almost always frozen like a rock, and yet the tender green blades live through it all, unless some thaw during winter expose the roots, and a subsequent frost seize them, in which case the plant dies. Large patches in many fields are thus destroyed in years when the snow is not deep enough. What survives must have suspended its life while the earth in which it grows is frozen. Yet, after being thus asleep for months — indeed, more than asleep, for every process of life must be stopped, the first breath of spring brings back its vigor, and it wakes

as if it had been growing all the time. How wonderful are even the common facts of nature! The life of plants I have always thought very much so. Our life perishes if it be stopped for a very short time, but the beautiful robe of flowers and verdure with which the world is adorned is well-nigh indestructible. Most of you know the story of Pope's weeping willow: the poet had received a present of a basket of figs from the levant, and when opening it, discovered that part of the twigs of which it was made were already budding, from some moisture that had reached them, and this led him to plant one, which, when it had grown, became the stock whence all the Babylonian willows in England have come. Then we are told that seeds gathered from beneath the ashes at Pompeii, after being buried for eighteen hundred years, have grown on being brought once more to the light, and it has often been found, that others brought up from the bottom of wells, when they were being dug, or from beneath accumulations of sand, of unknown age, have only to be sown near the surface to commence instantly to grow. It is said that wheat, found in the coffins of mummies in Egypt, has sprung up freely when sown, but the proof of any having done so is thought by others insufficient. Yet there is nothing to make such a thing impossible, and perhaps some future explorer like Dr. Layard or Mr. Loftus, may come on grains older still, in Babylon or Nineveh, and give us

bread from the wheat that Nebuchadnezzar or Semiramis used to eat. Indeed, M. Michelet tells us, that some seeds found in the inconceivably ancient Diluvial drift readily grew on being sown.

During the busy weeks in which we were getting our first field ready, we boys, though always out of doors, were not always at work. Henry used to bring out his gun with him, to take a shot at any thing he could see, and though there were not very many creatures round us, yet there were more when you looked for them than you would otherwise have thought. The woodpeckers were the strangest to us among them all. They would come quite near us, running up and down the trunks of the trees in every way, as flies run over a window-pane. There were three or four kinds: one, the rarest, known by being partly yellow; another, by the feathers on its back having a strange hairy-like look; the third was a smaller bird, about six inches long, but otherwise like its hairy relation; the fourth, and commonest, was the red-headed woodpecker. This one gets its name from the beautiful crimson of its head and neck, and the contrast of this bright color with the black and white of its body and wings, and with its black tail, makes it look very pretty. They would light on stumps of trees close to us, running round to the other side till we passed, if we came very close, and then reappearing the next instant. They kept up a constant tap, tap, tapping with their heavy

bills on the bark of any tree on which they happen to alight, running up the trunk, and stopping every minute with their tail resting on the bark to support them, and hammering as if for the mere love of the noise. Every grub or insect they thus discovered, was, in a moment, caught on their tongue, which was thrust out for the purpose. Henry shot one of them, after missing pretty often, for we were just beginning shooting as well as every thing else, and we brought it to the house to let my sisters see it, and to have another look at it ourselves. Being a bit of an ornithologist, he pointed out to us how the toes were four in number — two before and two behind — and how they were spread out to give the creature as firm hold as possible of the surface on which it was climbing, and how its tail was shaped like a wedge, and the feathers very strong, to prop it up while at work. Then there was the great heavy head and heavy bill, with the long thin neck, putting me in mind of a stone-breaker's hammer, with the thin handle and the heavy top. But its tongue was, perhaps, the most curious part of the whole. There were two long, arched, tendon-like things, which reached from the tongue round the skull, and passed quite over it down to the root of the bill at the nostrils; and, inside the wide circle thus made, a muscle, fixed at its two ends, provided the means of thrusting out the tongue with amazing swiftness and to a great length, just as you may move forward the top of a

fishing-rod in an instant by pulling the line which runs from the tip to the reel. My brother Robert, who was of a religious disposition, could not help telling us, when we had seen all this, that he thought it just another proof of the wonderful wisdom and goodness of God, to see how every thing was adapted to its particular end.

One little creature used to give us a great deal of amusement and pleasure. It was what Nisbet called a chitmunk, the right name of it being the ground-squirrel. It was a squirrel in every respect, except that, instead of the great bushy tail turned up over the back, it had a rounded hairy one, which was short and straight, and was only twitched up and down. The little things were to be seen every now and then on any old log, that marked where a tree had fallen long before. The moment we looked at them they would stare at us with their great black eyes, and, if we moved, they were into some hole in the log, or over the back of it, and out of sight in an instant. We all felt kindly disposed toward them, and never tried to shoot them. I suppose they were looking for nuts on the ground, as they feed largely on them, and carry off a great many, as well as stores of other food, in little cheek-pouches which they have, that they may be provided for in winter. They do not make their houses, like the other squirrels, in holes in the trees, but dig burrows in the woods, under logs, or in hillocks of earth, or at the roots of the trees, form-

ing a winding passage down to it, and then making two or three pantries, as I may call them, at the sides of their nest, or sitting and sleeping-room, for their extra food. They do not often go up the trees, but if they be frightened, and cannot get to their holes, they run up the trunks, and get from branch to branch with wonderful quickness. Sometimes we tried to catch one when it would thus go up some small, low tree, of which there were numbers on the edge of a stream two fields back on our farm; but it was always too quick for us, and after making sure I had it, and climbing the tree to get hold of it, it would be off in some magical way, before our eyes, let us do our best. Then, at other times, we would try to catch one in an old log, but with no better success. Henry would get to the one end and I to the other, and make sure it couldn't get out. It always did get out, however, and all we could do was to admire its beautiful shape, with the squirrel head, and a soft brown coat which was striped with black, lengthwise, and its arch little tail, which was never still a moment.

Some of the birds were the greatest beauties you could imagine. We would see one fly into the woods, all crimson, or seemingly so, and perhaps, soon after, another, which was like a living emerald. They were small birds — not larger than a thrush — and not very numerous; but I cannot trust myself to give their true names. The blue jay was one of the prettiest of all the feathered folk

that used to come and look at us. What a bright, quick eye it has! what a beautiful blue crest to raise or let down, as its pride or curiosity moves it or passes away! how exquisitely its wings are capped with blue, and barred with black and white! and its back — could any thing be finer than the tint of blue on it? Its very tail would be ornament enough for any one bird, with its elegant tapering shape, and its feathers barred so charmingly with black and white. But we got afterwards to have a kind of ill-will at the little urchins, when we came to have an orchard; for greater thieves than they are, when the fancy takes them, it would be hard to imagine. When breeding, they generally kept pretty close to the woods; but in September or October they would favor the gardens with visits; and then woe to any fruit within reach! But yet they ate so many caterpillars at times that I suppose we should not have grudged them a cherry feast occasionally. I am sure they must be great coxcombs, small though they be, for they are not much larger than a thrush, though the length of their tail makes them seem larger; they carry their heads so pertly, like to show themselves off so well, and are so constantly raising and letting down their beautiful crest, as if all the time thinking how well they look. John James Audubon, the ornithologist, got a number of them, of both sexes, alive, and tried to carry them over to England, to make us a present of the race, if it

were able to live in our climate; but the poor things all sickened and died on the way.

I must not forget the dear little blue bird, which comes all the way from the Far South as early as March, to stay the summer with us, not leaving till the middle or end of November, when he seems to bid a melancholy farewell to his friends, and returns to his winter retreat. In the spring and summer every place is enlivened with his cheerful song; but with the change of the leaf in October it dies away into a single note, as if he too felt sorry that the beautiful weather was leaving.

The blue bird is to America very much, in summer, what the robin is to us in England in winter — hopping as familiarly, as if it trusted every one, about the orchards and the fences. Sometimes it builds in a hole in an old apple-tree, for generation after generation; but very often it takes up its abode in little houses built specially for it, and fixed on a high pole, or on the top of some of the outhouses. We were sometimes amused to see its kindly ways while the hen was sitting on the nest. The little husband would sit close by her, and lighten her cares by singing his sweetest notes over and over; and, when he chanced to have found some morsel that he thought would please her — some insect or other — he would fly with it to her, spread his wing over her, and put it into her mouth. We used to take it for granted that it was the same pair that built, year after year, in the same

spot, but I never heard of any thing being done to prove it in any case. In that of other birds, however, this attachment to one spot has been very clearly shown. I have read somewhere of copper rings having been fastened round the legs of swallows, which were observed the year after to have returned, with this mark on them, to their former haunts. How is it that these tiny creatures can keep a note in their head of so long a journey as they take each autumn, and cross country after country, straight to a place thousands of miles distant? A man could not do it without all the helps he could get. I lose myself every now and then in the streets of any new city I may visit; and as to making my way across a whole kingdom without asking, I fear I would make only a very zigzag progress. Some courier pigeons, which one of the Arctic voyagers took to the Far North, on being let loose, made straight for the place to which they had been accustomed, in Ayrshire, in an incredibly short time. Lithgow, the old traveller, tells us, that one of these birds will carry a letter from Bagdad to Aleppo, which is thirty day's journey at the Eastern rate of travel, in forty-eight hours, so that it could have had no hesitation, but must have flown straight for its distant home. They say that when on their long flights, they and other birds, such as swallows, soar to a great height, and skim round in circles for a time, as if surveying the bearings of the land beneath them; but what eyes

they must have to see clearly over such a landscape as must open at so great an elevation! and how little, after all, can that help them on a journey of thousand of miles! Moore's beautiful verse speaks of the intentness with which the pigeon speeds to ts goal, and how it keeps so high up in the air:

> "The dove let loose in eastern skies,
> Returning fondly home,
> Ne'er stoops to earth her wing, nor flies
> Where idle warblers roam."

I have noticed that all birds, when on long flights, seek the upper regions of the air: the ducks and swans, that used to pass over us in the spring, on their way to their breeding-places in the Arctic regions, were always so high that they looked like strings of moving specks in the sky. They always fly in certain order, the geese in single file, arranged like a great V, the two sides of it stretching far away from each other, but the birds which form the figure never losing their respective places. Some of the ducks, on the other hand, kept in wedge-shaped phalanxes, like the order in which Hannibal disposed his troops at the Battle of Cannæ. Whether they fly so high to see better, or because the air is thinner and gives them less resistance, or to be out of the reach of danger, or to keep from any temptation to alight and loiter on their way, it would be hard to tell, but with all the help which their height can give them, is has always been a great wonder

to me how they knew the road to take. There must surely be some senses in such creatures of which we do not know, or those they have must be very much more acute than ours. How does a bee find its way home for miles? And how does the little humming-bird — of which I shall speak more hereafter — thread its way, in its swift arrowy flight, from Canada to the far South, and back again, each year? I am afraid we must all confess that we cannot tell. Our knowledge, of which we are sometimes so proud, is a very poor affair after all.

CHAPTER V.

Some family changes. — Amusements. — Cow-hunting. — Our "side-line." — The bush. — Adventures with rattlesnakes. — Garter-snakes. — A frog's flight for life. — Black squirrels.

I HAVE talked so long about the farm, and the beasts, and birds, that I had almost forgotten to speak of some changes which took place in our family in the first summer of our settlement. My eldest sister had, it seems, found time in Toronto to get in love, in spite of having to be mistress of such a household, and, of course, nothing could keep her past the week fixed for her marriage, which was to take place about two months after her getting to the River. She must needs, when the time drew near, get back to her beloved, and had to look out her share of the furniture, &c., to take with her, or rather to send off before. My eldest brother, Andrew, also, had cast many wry looks at the thick logs, and at his blistered hands, and had groaned through every very hot day, maintaining that there would soon be nothing left of him but the bones. "Melting moments, girls," he would say to my sisters; "nelting moments, as the sailor said under the line. I can't stand this; I shall go back to

England." So he and my eldest sister made it up that he should take her, and such of her chattels as were not sent on before, to Toronto, and should leave us under the charge of Robert. When the day came, we all went down to the wharf with them, and, after a rather sorrowful parting, heard in due time of the marriage of the one, and, a good while afterwards — for there were no steamers in those days across the Atlantic — of the safe return of the other to England. This was the first break up of our household in America ; and it left us for a time lonely enough, though there were still so many of us together. We didn't care much for my sisters leaving, for she would still be within reach, but it was quite likely we should never see Andrew again. I have always thought it was a very touching thing that those who have grown up together should be separated, after a few years, perhaps never to meet again. My brother Robert made a very tender allusion to this at worship that night, and moved us all by praying that we might all of us lead such Christian lives, through God's grace, that we might meet again in the Great Hereafter, if not in our earthly pilgrimage. He wound up the service by repeating in his very striking way — for he recited beautifully — Burns' touching words :

"And when, at last, we reach that coast,
O'er life's rough ocean driven,
May we rejoice no wanderer lost ;
A family in heaven.

After our wheat had been sown we had time to take a little leisure, and what with fishing at the end of the long wharf by day, and in the canoe, by torchlight, in the evenings, or strolling through the woods with our guns or rifles, or practising with the latter at a rough target made by cutting a broad slice off a tree, from which we dug out the bullets again to save the lead, the autumn passed very pleasantly. Of course it was not all play. There was plenty more forest to be cleared, and we kept at that pretty steadily, though a half-holiday or a whole one did not seem out of the way to us. I, as the youngest, had for my morning and evening's task to go to the woods and bring home the cows to be milked, and at times, the oxen, when we wanted them for some kind of work. The latter were left in the woods for days together, when we had nothing for them to do, and when we did bring them in, we always gave them a little salt at the barn-door to try to get them into the habit of returning of their own accord. Cattle and horses in Canada all need to be often indulged with this luxury ; the distance from the sea leaving hardly any of it in the air, or in the grass and other vegetation. It was sometimes a pleasure to go cow-hunting, as we called it, but sometimes quite the reverse. I used to set out, with the dogs for company, straight up the blazed line at the side of our lot. I mean, up a line along which the trees had been marked by slices cut out of their sides, to show the way to the

lots at the back of ours. It was all open for a little way back, for the post road passed up from the bank of the river along the side of our farm, for five or six acres, and then turned at a right angle parallel with the river again, and there was a piece of the side line cleared for some distance beyond the turn. After this piece of civilization had been passed, however, nature had it all to herself. The first twelve or fifteen acres lay fine and high, and could almost always be got over easily, but the ground dropped down at that distance to the edge of a little stream, and rose on the other side, to stretch away in a dead level, for I know not how many miles. The streamlet, which was sometimes much swollen after thaws or rains, was crossed by a rough sort of bridge formed of the cuts of young trees, which rested on stouter supports of the same kind, stretching from bank to bank. One of the freshets, however, for a time destroyed this easy communication, and left us no way of crossing till it was repaired, but either by fording, or by venturing over the trunk of a tree, which was felled so as to reach across the gap and make an apology for a bridge. It used at first to be a dreadful job to get over this primitive pathway, but I got so expert that I could run over it easily and safely enough. The dogs, however, generally preferred the water, unless when it was deep. Then there were pieces of swampy land, further back, over which a string of felled trees, one beyond the other, offered, again,

the only passage. These were the worst to cross, for the wet had generally taken off the bark, and they often bent almost into the water with your weight. One day, when I was making my best attempt at getting over one of these safely, an old settler on a lot two miles back made his appearance at the further side.

"Bad roads, Mr. Brown," said I, accosting him, for every one speaks to every one else in such a place as that.

"Yes, Mr. Stanley — bad roads, indeed; but it's nothing to have only to walk out and in. What do you think it must have been when I had to bring my furniture back on a sleigh in summer-time? We used wagons on the dry places, and then got sleighs for the swamps; and, Mr. Stanley, do you know, I'm sure two or three times you hardly saw more of the oxen for a minute than just the horns. We had all to go through the water ourselves to get them to pull, and even then they stuck fast with our load, and we had to take it off and carry it on our backs the best way we could. You don't know any thing about it, Mr. Stanley. I had to carry a chest of drawers on my shoulders through all this water, and every bit that we ate for a whole year, till we got a crop, had to be brought from the front, the same way, over these logs."

No doubt he spoke the truth, but, notwithstanding his gloomy recollections, it used to be grand

fun to go back, except when I could not find the cows, or when they would not let themselves be driven home. The dogs would be off after a squirrel every little while, though they never could catch one, or they would splash into the water with a thousand gambols to refresh themselves from the heat, and get quit of the mosquitoes. Then there can be nothing more beautiful than the woods themselves, when the leaves are in all their bravery, and the ground is varied by a thousand forms of verdure, wherever an opening lets in the sun. The trees are not broad and umbrageous like those in the parks of England. Their being crowded together makes them grow far higher before the branches begin, so that you have great high trunks on every side, like innumerable pillars in some vast cathedral, and a high open roof of green, far over head, the white and blue of the sky filling up the openings in the fretwork of the leaves. There is always more or less undergrowth to heighten the beauty of the scene, but not enough, except in swampy places, to obscure the view, which is only closed in the distance by the closer and closer gathering of the trees as they recede. The thickness of some of these monarchs of the forest, the fine shape of others, and the vast height of nearly all; the exhaustless charms of the great canopy of mingled leaves and branches, and sky and cloud above; the picturesque vistas in the openings here and there around; the endless

variety of shade and form in the young trees springing up at intervals; the flowers in one spot, the rough fretting of fallen and mouldering trees, bright with every tint of fungus, or red with decay, or decked with mosses and lichens, in others, and the graceful outline of broad beds of fern, contrasting with the many-colored carpet of leaves — made it delightful to stroll along. The silence that reigns heightens the pleasure and adds a calm solemnity. The stroke of an axe can be heard for miles, and so may the sound of a cow-bell, as I have sometimes found to my sorrow. But it was only when the cows or oxen could be easily got that I was disposed to think of the poetry of the journey. They always kept together, and I knew the sound of our bell at any distance; but sometimes I could not, by any listening, catch it, the wearer having perhaps lain down to chew the cud, and then, what a holloaing and getting up on fallen trees to look for them, and wandering till I was fairly tired. One of the oxen had for a time the honor of bearing the bell, but I found, after a while, that he added to my trouble in finding him and his friends, by his cunning, and we transferred it to one of the cows. The brute had a fixed dislike to going home, and had learned that the tinkle of the bell was a sure prelude to his being led off, to prevent which, he actually got shrewd enough to hold his head, while resting, in so still a way that he hardly made a sound. I have seen him,

when I had at last hunted him up, looking sideways at me with his great eyes, afraid for his life to stir his head lest the horrid clapper should proclaim his presence. When I did get them they were not always willing to be driven, and would set off with their heads and tails up, the oxen accompanying them, the bell making a hideous clangor, careering away over every impediment, straight into the woods, in, perhaps, the very opposite direction to that in which I wished to lead them. Then for a race to head them, round logs, over logs, through brush and below it, the dogs dashing on ahead, where they thought I was going, and looking back every minute, as if to wonder what I was about. It was sometimes the work of hours to get them home, and sometimes for days together we could not find them at all.

There is little to fear from wild animals in the bush in Canada. The deer were too frightened to trouble us, and, though I have some stories to tell about bears and wolves, they were so seldom seen that they did not give us much alarm. But I was always afraid of the rattlesnakes, especially in the long grass that grew in some wet places. I never saw but one, however, and that was once, years after, when I was riding up a narrow road that had been cut through the woods. My horse was at a walk, when, suddenly, it made a great spring to one side, very nearly unseating me, and then stood looking at a low bush and trembling in every limb.

The next moment I heard the horrible rattle, and my horse commenced a set of leaps from one side to the other, backing all the while, and snorting wildly. I could not get off, and as little could I get my horse turned away, so great was his fear. Two men luckily came up just at this time, and at once saw the cause of the poor brute's alarm, which was soon ended by one of them making a dash at the snake with a thick stick, and breaking its neck at a blow. Henry told us once that he was chased by one which he had disturbed, and I can easily credit it, for I have seen smaller snakes get very infuriated, and if one was alarmed, as in Henry's case, it might readily glide after him for some distance. However, it fared badly in the end, for a stick ended its days abruptly. I was told one story that I believe is true, though ridiculous enough. A good man, busy mowing in his field, in the summer costume of hat, shirt, and boots, found himself, to his horror, face to face with a rattlesnake, which, on his instantly throwing down his scythe and turning to flee, sprang at his tails and fixed its fangs in them inextricably. The next spring — the cold body of the snake struck against his legs, making him certain he had been bitten. He was a full mile from his house, but despair added strength and speed. Away he flew — over logs, fences, every thing — the snake dashing against him with every jump, till he reached his home, into which he rushed, shouting, "The

snake, the snake! I'm bitten, I'm bitten!" Of course they were all alarmed enough, but when they came to examine, the terror proved to be the whole of the injury suffered, the snake's body having been knocked to pieces on the way, the head, only, remaining fixed in the spot at which it had originally sprung. David and Henry were one day at work in our field, where there were some bushes close to a stump near the fence. The two were near each other when the former saw a number of young rattlesnakes at Henry's side, and, as a good joke, for we laughed at the danger, it seemed so slight, cried out—"Henry! Henry! look at the rattlesnakes!" at the same time mounting the fence to the highest rail to enjoy Henry's panic. But the young ones were not disposed to trouble any one, so that he instantly saw that he had nothing to fear; whereas, on looking toward David, there was quite enough to turn the laugh the other way. "Look at your feet, David!" followed in an instant, and you may easily imagine how quickly the latter was down the outer side of the fence, and away to a safe distance, when, on doing as he was told, he saw the mother of the brood poised below him for a spring, which, but for Henry, she would have made the next moment.

Pigs have a wonderful power of killing snakes, their hungry stomachs tempting them to the attack for the sake of eating their bodies. I don't know

that they ever set on rattlesnakes, but a friend of mine saw one with the body of a great black snake, the thickness of his wrist, and four or five feet long, lying over its back, Monsieur Pig converting the whole into pork as fast as he could, by vigorously swallowing joint after joint.

The garter snake is the only creature of its kind which is very common in Canada, and very beautiful and harmless it is. But it is never seen without getting killed, unless it beat a very speedy retreat into some log or pile of stones, or other shelter. The influence of the story of the Fall in the Garden of Eden is fatal to the whole tribe of snakes, against every individual of which a merciless crusade is waged the moment one is seen. The garter snake feeds on frogs and other small creatures, as I chanced to see one day when walking up the road. In a broad bed of what they call tobacco-weed, a chase for life or death was being made between a poor frog and one of these snakes. The frog evidently knew it was in danger, for you never saw such leaps as it would take to get away from its enemy, falling into the weeds, after each, so as to be hidden for a time, if it had only been able to keep so. But the snake would raise itself up on a slight coil of its tail, and from that height search every place with its bright wicked eyes for its prey, and presently glide off toward where the poor frog lay panting. Then for another leap, and another poising, to scan the field. I don't know how it

ended, for I had watched them till they were a good way off. How the snake would ever swallow it, if it caught it, is hard to imagine, for certainly it was at least three times as thick as itself. But we know that snakes can do wonderful things in that way. Why, the corbra-de-capello, at the Zoölogical Gardens, swallowed a great railway rug some time ago, and managed to get it up again when it found it could make nothing of it. It is a mercy our jaws do not distend in such a fashion, for we would look very horrible if we were in the habit of swallowing two large loaves at a time, or of taking our soup with a spoon a foot broad, which would, however, be no worse than a garter-snake swallowing a frog whole. It is amazing how fierce some of the small snakes are. I have seen one of six or eight inches in length dart at a walking-stick by which it had been disturbed, with a force so great as to be felt in your hand at the further end. Homer, in the Iliad, says that Menelaus was as brave as a fly, which, though so small, darts once and again in a man's face, and will not be driven away; but he might have had an additional comparison for his hero if he had seen a snake no bigger than a pencil charging at a thick stick held in a man's hand.

We had very pleasant recreation now and then, hunting black squirrels, which were capital eating. They are much larger than either the gray or the red ones, and taste very much like rabbits, from

which, indeed, it would be hard to distinguish them when they are on the table. Both they and the gray squirrel are very common, and are sometimes great pests to the farmer, making sad havoc with his Indian corn while green, and with the young wheat. In Pennsylvania this at one time came to such a pitch that a law was passed, offering threepence a-head for every one destroyed, which resulted, in 1749, in 8,000*l.* being paid in one year as head-money for those killed. Their great numbers sometimes develop strange instincts, very different from those we might expect. From scarcity of food, or some other unknown cause, all the squirrels in a large district will at times take it into their heads to make a regular migration to some other region. Scattered bodies are said to gather from distant points, and marshal themselves into one great host, which then sets out on its chosen march, allowing nothing whatever — be it mountain or river — to stop them. We ourselves had proof enough that nothing in the shape of water, short of a lake, could do it. Our neighbors agreed in telling us that, a few years before we came, it had been a bad summer for nuts, and that the squirrels of all shades had evidently seen the perils of the approaching winter, and made up their minds to emigrate to more favored lands. Whether they held meetings on the subject, and discussed the policy to be pursued, was not known ; but it is certain that squirreldom at large decided on a united course of action.

Having come to this determination, they gathered, it appears, in immense numbers, in the trees at the water's edge, where the river was at least a mile broad, and had a current of about two miles an hour, and, without hesitation, launched off in thousands on the stream, straight for the other side. Whether they all could swim so far, no one, of course, could tell; but vast numbers reached the southern shore, and made for the woods, to seek there the winter supplies which had been deficient in the district they had left. How strange for little creatures like them to contrive and carry out an organized movement, which looked as complete and deliberate as the migration of as many human beings! What led them to go to the south rather than to the north? There were no woods in sight on the southern side, though there were forests enough in the interior. I think we can only come to the conclusion, which cannot be easily confuted, that the lower creatures have some faculties of which we have no idea whatever.

The black squirrels are very hardy. You may see them in the woods, even in the middle of winter, when their red or gray brethren, and the little ground squirrels, are not to be seen. On bright days, however, even these more delicate creatures venture out, to see what the world is like, after their long seclusion in their holes in the trees. They must gather a large amount of food in the summer and autumn to be sufficient to keep them through

the long months of cold and frost, and their diligence in getting ready in time for the season when their food is buried out of their reach, is a capital example to us. They carry things from great distances to their nests, if food be rather scarce, or if they find any delicacy worth laying up for a treat in the winter. When the wheat is ripe they come out in great numbers to get a share of the ears, and run off with as many as they can manage to steal.

CHAPTER VI.

Spearing fish. — Ancient British canoes. — Indian ones. — A bargain with an Indian. — Henry's cold bath. — Canadian thunderstorms. — Poor Yorick's death. — Our glorious autumns. — The change of the leaf. — Sunsets. — Indian summer. — The fall rains and the roads. — The first snow. — Canadian cold. — A winter landscape. — "Ice-storms." — Snow crystals. — The minute perfection of God's works. — Deer-shooting. — David's misfortune. — Useless cruelty. — Shedding of the stag's horns.

SPEARING fish by moonlight was a great amusement with us in the beautiful autumn evenings. We had bought a canoe from an Indian for eight dollars, I think — that is, about thirty-two shillings, and it formed our boat on these occasions. Perhaps, however, before speaking of our adventures on the waters, I had better describe this new purchase, and the scene of its transference to our hands, which was as curious as itself. It was made out of a long cut of a black walnut-tree, which had been burned and hollowed to the required depth, breadth, and length, and had then been shaped, outside, by an axe, to the model proposed. They are generally quite light, but ours was, to other canoes, what a ship's boat is to a skiff. It must have taken a long time to finish, but time is of no value to an Indian. Indeed, the longer any thing takes him

the better, as it gives him at least something to do, when, otherwise, he would likely have relapsed into total idleness. There is no keel on canoes, but only a round bottom, and the ends are sharp and both alike. Of course, such a vessel has a natural facility at rolling, and needs only the slightest aid on your part to turn in the water like a log, so that safety depends very much on your being steady, and not leaning, under any circumstances, to either side. In some parts of Canada they are made of the tough, light bark of the birch tree, which is sewed into a long sheet, and stretched over a light but strong framework of the desired shape. Before using it, the bark is thoroughly soaked in oil to make it waterproof. When finished, such a canoe is really elegant, rising high into a wide circular form at the ends, which are made very sharp to cut the water easily. I have seen them beautifully finished, with differently colored porcupine quills worked into the edges, and fanciful designs at the ends. They are so light that one which will hold twenty men weighs only a few hundred-weight, and can be easily carried by three or four men. Then, they are so elastic, that they yield to blows which would break a canoe of wood. When they do get an injury, it is amusing to see how easily they are mended. You can darn them like a stocking, or patch them like a shoe, using wire, however, instead of thread, and making all tight by a coating of the resinous matter got from the red pine. The inge-

nuity that invented such a refinement on the common canoe, as is shown in the birch-bark one, is enough to redeem the character of the Indian from the low estimate of his mechanical powers sometimes heard. If we wonder at the contrast between such vessels at their best and our beautiful boats and ships, we must remember that our ancestors could boast of nothing better than these Indians make to-day. In both Scotland and England, canoes have been often found in draining a lake, or in excavations near streams, or near the sea-shore, where bogs or other causes have covered the ancient surface of the ground. One was discovered some years since at the foot of the Ochill hills, many feet under a bog, and not very far from it there was found the skeleton of a small whale, with the head of a harpoon sticking in its backbone. Others, found elsewhere, are preserved in various public and private museums. It is striking to think, from such discoveries as these, and from what we know of the boats of savage nations generally over the world, how nearly men of all ages, when placed in the same position, when they are at similar stages of civilization, resemble each other in their thoughts and contrivances to meet the common wants of life. All over the world hollow trees have been used for the first steps of navigation, and the birch-bark canoe still finds a representative in the coracle which the Welsh fisherman carries home on his back after using it, as his ancestors have done for generation

after generation, while the Greenlander goes to sea in his light kaiack of seal-skin, as the polished inhabitant of Babylon, as Herodotus tells us, used to float his goods down the Great River in round boats made of skins stretched on a frame of wicker-work.

Instead of oars, the canoe is propelled by paddles, which are short oars, with a broader blade. They are held in both hands, so that a single person has only one to work instead of having one in each hand, as with oars, when alone in a boat. An Indian in a canoe, if by himself, sits at the end and strikes his paddle into the water at each side alternately, every now and then putting it out behind as a rudder, to turn himself in any particular direction. The one we bought was, as I have said, far too heavy for comfortable use, and was sold to us, I believe, for that reason. It was worse to paddle it empty than to paddle a proper one full of people — at least we came to think so; but we knew no better at first than to like it for its massiveness, never thinking of the weight we should have to push through the water. The price, however, was not very great, though more than would have got us a right one, had we known enough. The Indian who sold it to us paddled up with it, with his wife in it with him, one morning, his dress being a dirty printed calico shirt, and a pair of cloth leggings; her's, the never-failing blanket, and leggings, like those of her husband. They were both rather elderly, and by no means attractive in ap-

pearance. Robert and the rest of us happened to be near the fence at the river side at the time; and as the Indian came up, he saluted him, as is usual, with the words, "Bo' jour," a corruption of the phrase, "Bon jour," indicating curiously the extent of the old French dominion in America — every Indian, in any part, understanding, or, at least, acknowledging it. A grunt on the part of our visitor conveyed his return of the courtesy, and was presently followed by, "C'noo, sell, good — you buy?" Robert, thus addressed, willingly enough entered into temptation, having determined, sometime before, to buy one. Like every one else in Canada, he seemed naturally to think that bad English makes good Indian, and pursued the dialogue somewhat as follows: — Robert — "Good c'noo?" Indian, with a grunt, "Good," making sundry signs with his hands, to show how it skimmed the water, and how easily it could be steered, both qualities being most sadly deficient, as he must have known. Robert — "What for you ask?" Indian, holding up eight fingers, and nodding toward them, "dollar," making, immediately after, an imitation of smoking, to stand for an additional value in tobacco. Robert — "Why you sell?" Indian — No answer, but a grunt, which might either hide a wish to decline a difficult question, by pretending ignorance, or any thing else we like to suppose. Then followed more dumb-show, to let us know what a treasure he was parting

with. My brother found it hopeless to get any information from him, nothing but grunts and an old word or two of English following a number of inquiries. After a time the bargain was struck, and having received the money and the tobacco, he and his spouse departed, laughing in their sleeves, I dare say, at their success in getting a canoe well sold which needed two or three men to propel it at a reasonable rate.

It was with this affair we used to go out on our spearing expeditions. A cresset, like those used in old times to hold watchmen's lights, and a spear with three prongs and a long handle, were all the apparatus required. The cresset was fixed in the bows of the canoe, and a knot of pitch-pine kindled in it, threw a bright light over and through the water. Only very still nights would do, for if there was any ripple the fish could not be seen. When it was perfectly calm we filled our cresset, and setting it a fire, one of us would take his place near the light, spear in hand, standing ready to use it; and another seated himself at the stern with a paddle, and, with the least possible noise, pushed off along the shallow edge of the river. The fish could be seen a number of feet down, resting on the bottom; but in very deep water the spear could not get down quickly enough, while the position of the fish itself was changed so much by the refraction of the light, that it was very hard to hit it even if we were not too slow. The stillness of the

night — the beauty of the shining skies -- the delicious mildness of the autumnal evenings — the sleeping smoothness of the great river — the play of light and shade from our fire — the white sand of the bottom, with the forms of the fish seen on it as if through colored crystal — and the excitement of darting at them every few yards, made the whole delightful. At first we always missed, by miscalculating the position of our intended booty; but, after going out a few times with John Courtenay, a neighbor, and noticing how much he allowed for the difference between the real and the apparent spot for which to aim, we got the secret of the art, and gradually managed to become pretty good marksmen. There was an island in the river, at the upper end of which a long tongue of shallow bottom reached up the stream, and on this we found the best sport: black bass, pike, herrings, white-fish, cat-fish, sun-fish, and I don't know what else, used to fall victims on this our best preserve. I liked almost as well to paddle as to stand in the bows to spear the fish, for watching the spearsman and looking down at the fish kept you in a flash of pleasant excitement all the time. Not a word was spoken in the canoe, but I used to *think* words enough. "There's a great sun-fish at the right hand, let me steer for it;" and silently the paddle would move us toward it, my brother motioning me with his hand either to hold back or turn more this way, or that, as seemed necessary. "I

wonder if he'll get him!" would rise in my mind, as the spear was slowly poised. "Will he dart off?" "He moves a little — ah! there's a great pike; make a dart at him — whew, he's gone!' and, sure enough, only the bare ground was visible. Perhaps the next was a white-fish, and in a moment a successful throw would transfix it, and then, the next, it would be in the bottom of the canoe. But it was not always plain sailing with us, for Henry was so fierce in his thrusts at first, that, one night, when he made sure of getting a fine bass he saw, he overbalanced himself with a jerk, and went in along with the spear, head over heels. The water was not deep enough to do him any harm, but you may be sure we did not fish any more that night. Picking himself up, the unfortunate wight vented his indignation on the poor fish, which, by most extraodinary logic, he blamed for his calamity I couldn't for the world help laughing; nor could Henry himself, when he had got a little over his first feelings of astonishment and mortification.

The quantity of fish that some can get in a night's spearing is often wonderful. I have watched Courtenay, on a night when fish were plenty, lifting them from the water almost every minute, though very few were larger than herrings, and he had only their backs at which to aim. In some parts of Canada there was higher game than in our waters — the salmon-trout, which is often as large as our salmon, and the "maskelonge,' a corruption

of the French words "masque" and "longue," a kind of pike with a projecting snout, whence its name — offering a prize of which we could not boast. It must be hard work to get such prey out of the water, but the harder it is the more exciting is the sport for those who are strong enough. The Indians in some districts live to a great extent on the fish they get in this way.

I had almost forgotten to speak of the thunder and lightning which broke on the sultriness of our hottest summer weather. Rain is much less frequent in Canada than in Britain, but when it does come, it often comes in earnest. It used to rebound from the ground for inches, and a very few minutes were sufficient to make small torrents run down every slope in the ground. When we afterwards had a garden in front of the house, we found it was almost impossible to keep the soil on it from the violence of the rains. Indeed, we gave up the attempt, on finding every thing we tried fail, and sowed it all with grass, to the great delight of the calves, to whom it was made over as a nursery. There is music, no doubt, in the sound of rain, both in the light patter of a summer shower, and in the big drops that dance on the ground; but there are differences in this as in other kinds. I have stood sometimes below the green branches in the woods, when a thin cloud was dropping its wealth on them, and have been charmed by the murmur. But the heavy rain that came most

frequently in the hot weather, falling as if through some vast cullender, was more solemn, and filled you with something like awe. It was often accompanied by thunder and lightning, such as those who live in cooler climates seldom hear or see. The amount of the electricity in the atmosphere of any country depends very much on the heat of the weather. Captain Grayhame, who had commanded a frigate on the East India station, told me once, when on a short visit, that, in the Straits of Malacca, he had to order the sails to be furled every day at one o'clock, a thunderstorm coming on regularly at that hour, accompanied with wind so terrible, that the canvas of the ship would often have been torn into ribbons, and knotted into hard lumps, if he had not done so. Thunderstorms are not so exact nor so frequent in Canada, but they came too often in some years for my taste. I was startled out of my sleep one night by a peal that must have burst within a few yards of the house, the noise exceeding any thing I ever heard before or since. You don't know what thunder is till a cloud is fired that way at your ear. Our poor dog Yorick, which we had brought from England with us, was so terrified at the violence of the storms that broke over us once and again, that he used to jump in through any open window, if the door were shut, and hide himself under the bed till all was quiet. He lost his life at last, poor brute, through his terror at thunder, for one day when it had come on,

the windows and doors happening to be closed, he rushed into the woods in his mortal fear, and coming on the shanty of a settler, flew in and secreted himself below his accustomed shelter, the bed. The owner of the house, not knowing the facts of the case, naturally enough took it for granted that the dog was mad, and forthwith put an end to his troubles by shooting him. It was a great grief to us all to lose so kind and intelligent a creature, but we could hardly blame his destroyer.

There is a wonderful sublimity sometimes in the darkness and solemn hush of nature that goes before one of these storms. It seems as if the pulse of all things were stopped. The leaves tremble, though there is not a breath of wind; the birds either hide in the forest, or fly low in terror; the waters look black, and are ruffled over all their surface. It seems as if all things around knew of the impending terrors. I never was more awed in my life, I think, than at the sight of the heavens and the accompanying suspense of nature one afternoon, in the first summer we were on the river. The tempest had not burst, but it lay in the bosom of portentous clouds, of a strange, unearthly look and color, that came down to within a very short distance of the earth. Not a sound broke the awful silence; the wind, as well as all things else, was still, and yet the storm-clouds moved steadily to the south, apparently only a very few yards higher than the trees. The darkness was like that of an eclipse,

and no one could have said at what instant the prison of the lightnings and thunders would rend above him and envelope him in its horrors. I could not, dared not stir, but stood where I was till the great gray masses, through which it seemed as if I could see the shimmer of the aërial fires, had sailed slowly over to the other side of the river, and the light, in part, returned.

The lightning used to leave curious traces of its visits in its effects on isolated trees all round. There was a huge pine in a field at the back of the house that had been its sport more than once. The great top had been torn off, and the trunk was split into ribbons, which hung far down the sides. Many others, which I have seen in different parts, had been ploughed into deep furrows almost from top to bottom. The telegraph-posts, since they have been erected, have been an especial attraction. I have seen fully a dozen of them in one long stretch split up, and torn spirally, through their whole length, by a flash which had struck the wire and run along it. That more people are not killed by it seems wonderful; yet there are many accidents of this kind, after all. In the first or second year of our settlement, a widow lady, living a few miles up the river, was found dead in her bed, killed in a storm, and we afterwards heard of several others perishing in the same way.

Hail often accompanies thunder and lightning in Canada, and the pieces are sometimes of a size that

lets one sympathize with the Egyptians when Moses sent down a similar visitation on them. I remember reading of a hailstorm on the Black Sea in the midst of hot weather, the pieces in which were, some of them, a pound weight, threatening death to any one they might strike. I never saw them such a size in Canada, but used to think that it was bad enough to have them an inch and a half long. They must be formed by a cloud being whirled up, by some current in the air, to such a height as freezes its contents, even in the heat of summer.

The weather in the fall was delightful — better, I think, than in any other season of the year. Getting its name from the beginning of the fall of the leaves, this season lasts on till winter pushes it aside. Day after day was bright and almost cloudless, and the heat had passed into a balmy mildness, which made the very feeling of being alive a pleasure. Every thing combined to make the landscape beautiful. The great resplendent river, flowing so softly it seemed scarce to move — its bosom a broad sheet of molten silver, on which clouds, and sky, and white sails, and even the further banks, with the houses, and fields, and woods, far back from the water, were painted as in a magic mirror — was a beautiful sight, of which we never tired; like the swans in St. Mary's Loch, which, Wordsworth says, "float double, swan and shadow," we had ships *in* as well as *on* the waters; and not a branch, nor twig, nor leaf of the great trees, nor of the bushes,

nor a touch in the open landscape, was wanting as we paddled along the shores, or looked across.

And what shall I say of the sunsets? Milton says —

> "Now came still evening on, and twilight gray
> Had in her sober livery all things clad."

but this would not do for some of those autumn days. The yellow light would fill earth, and air, and sky. The trees, seen between you and the setting sun, were shining amber, in trunk, and branch, and leaf; and the windows of neighbors' houses were flaming gold; while here and there branches on which the sun shone at a different angle seemed light itself; and in the distance the smoke rose purple, till, while you gazed, the whole vision faded, and faded, through every shade of green and violet, into the dark-blue of the stars.

By the beginning of September the first frosts had touched the trees, and the change of color in the leaves at once set in. It is only when this has taken place that the forests put on their greatest beauty; though, indeed, a feeling of sadness was always associated with these autumnal splendors, connected as they are, like the last colors of the dolphin, with thoughts of decay and death. With each day, after the change had commenced, the beauty increased. Each kind of tree — the oak, the elm, the beech, the ash, the birch, the walnut, and, above all, the maple — had its own hue, and every hue was lovely.

Then there were the solemn pines, an tamaracks, and cedars, setting off the charms of their gayer brethren by their sober green, which at a distance looked almost black. The maple-leaf, the first to color, remained, throughout, the most beautiful, in its golden yellow and crimson. No wonder it has become to Canada what the shamrock is to Ireland, or the rose and the thistle, to England and Scotland. The woods look finest, I think, when the tints are just beginning, and green, yellow, and scarlet are mingled in every shade of transition. But what sheets of golden flame they became after a time! Then every leaf had something of its own in which it differed from all others. Yonder, the colors blended together into pink of the brightest tint; then came a dash of lilac and blue, and, away by itself, a clump rose, like an islet, of glowing red gold. Lofty trees, and humble undergrowth, and climbing creepers — all alike owned the magic influence, and decked the landscape with every tint that can be borrowed from the light, till the whole looked like the scenery of some fairy tale.

The sunsets, as the year deepened into winter, grew, I thought, if possible, more and more glorious. The light sank behind mountains of gold and purple, and shot up its splendors, from beyond, on every bar and fleck of cloud, to the zenith. Then came the slow advance of night, with the day retreating from before it to the glorious gates of the west, at first in a flush of crimson, then in a flood

of amber, till at last, with a lingering farewell, it left us in paler and paler green. I have seen every tree turned into gold as I looked across the river, as the evening fell. Milman speaks, in one of his poems, of the "golden air of heaven." Such sights as these sunsets make the image a reality, and almost involuntarily lead one, as he gazes on the wide glory that rests on all things, to think how beautiful the better world must be if this one be so lovely.

The Indian summer came with the end of October and lasted about ten days, a good deal of rain having fallen just before. While it lasted, it was deliciously mild, like the finest April weather in England. A soft mist hung over the whole panorama round us, mellowing every thing to a peculiar spiritual beauty. The sun rose, and travelled through the day, and set, behind a veil of haze, through which it showed like a great crate of glowing embers. As it rose, the haze reddened higher and higher up the sky, till, at noon, the heavens were like the hollow of a vast half-transparent rose, shutting out the blue. It was like the dreamy days of Thomson's "Castle of Indolence," where every thing invited to repose. You could look at the sun at any hour, and yet the view around was not destroyed, but rather made more lovely What the cause of this phenomenon may be I have never been able to find out. One writer suggests one thing, and another something else; but it

seems as if nobody knew the true reason of it. If I might venture a guess, I would say that perhaps it arises from the condensation of the vapors of the earth by the first frosts, while the summer and autumn heats are yet great enough in the soil to cause them to rise in abundance.

Both before and after the Indian summer the first unmistakable heralds of winter visited us, in the shape of morning hoar-frost, which melted away as the day advanced. It was wonderfully beautiful to look at it, in its effects on the infinitely-varied colors of the leaves which still clung to the trees. Its silver dust, powdered over the golden yellow of some, and the bright-red, or dark-brown, or green of others, the minutest outline of each preserved, looked charming in the extreme. Then, not only the leaves, but the trunks, and branches, and lightest sprays, were crusted with the same snowy film, till, as far as the eye could reach, it seemed as if some magical transformation had happened in the night, and a mockery of nature had been moulded in white. But what shall I say of the scene when the sun came up in the east, to have his look at it as well as we? What rainbow tints of every possible shade! what diamond sparkling of millions of crystals at once! It was like the gardens of Aladdin, with the trees bending under their wealth of rubies, and sapphires, and all things precious. But the spectacle was as short lived as it was lovely. By noon, the last trace was gone.

The autumnal rains are of great value to the farmers and the country generally, by filling the wells and natural reservoirs, so as to secure a plentiful supply of water for winter, and thus they were welcome enough on this ground to most, though we, with the river at hand, could have very well done without them. But, in their effects on the roads, they were a cause of grief to all alike. Except near towns, the roads all through Canada were, in those days, what most of them are, even yet, only mud; and hence you may judge their state after long-continued tropical rains. All I have said of our journey to the river in the early summer, might be repeated of each returning fall. Men came to the house every day or two to borrow an axe or an auger, to extemporize some repair of their broken-down wagons or vehicles. One pitchy night I came upon two who were intensely busy, by the light of a lantern, mending a wagon, with the help of a saw, an auger, an axe, and a rope. Of course, I stopped to offer assistance, but I had come only in time to be too late, and was answered that my help was not wanted. "All's right — there's no use making a fuss — Jim, take back them things where you got them, and let's go a-head." As to thanks for my offer, it would have been extravagant to expect them. They had cobbled their vehicle, and, on Jim's return, were off into the darkness as coolly as if nothing had happened. The dangers of the roads are a regular part of the

calculations of the back-country Canadians, to encounter which they carry an axe, a wrench, and a piece of rope, which are generally enough for the rude wheelwright surgery required. It is amusing to hear with what perfect indifference they treat misadventures which would totally disconcert an old countryman. I remember a man whom I met patching up his light wagon — which is the name for a four-wheeled gig — setting me laughing at his account of his triumphs over all the accidents of travel. "I never was stopped yet," he went on to assure me. "Once I was in my buggy, and the tire of one of the wheels came off without my noticing; I ran back some miles to try if I could get it, but I couldn't find it. But I guess I never say die, so I took a rail and stuck it in below the lame corner, and I tell you we made the dust fly!"

A little brick church had been built about two miles from us, some time before we came to the river, but the mud was a sure hinderance to such of the congregation as could not come by water. Any attempt at week-night meetings of any kind was, of course, out of the question. We were pretty nearly close prisoners till the frost should come to relieve us.

As in many other cases, however, this first step towards cure was almost worse than the disease. The frost often came in bitter fierceness for some time before any snow fell, and then, who shall sing in sad enough strains the state of the roads?

Imagine mile after mile of mud, first poached into a long honeycomb by the oxen and horses, and cut into longitudinal holes by the wheels, then frozen, in this state, in a night, into stone. I once had to ride nearly sixty miles over such a set of pitfalls. My brother Frederic was with me, but he had slipped in the stable and sprained his shoulder, so that I had almost to lift him into the saddle. He came with me to lead back my horse at the sixty miles' end, where the roads permitted the stage to run for my further journey. We were two days on the way, and such days. The thermometer was below zero, our breath froze on our eyelashes every minute, and the horses had long icicles at their noses, and yet we could only stumble on at a slow walk, the horses picking their steps with the greatest difficulty, and every now and then coming down almost on their knees. Sometimes we got so cold we had to get off and walk with the bridles on our arms; and then there was the getting Frederic mounted again. I thought we should never get to the end of the first day's ride. It got dark long before we reached it, and we were afraid to sit any longer on the horses, so that we finished it by groping in the pitchy darkness, as well as we could, for some miles.

The first snow fell in November, and lay, that year, from that time until April. The climate has become much milder since, from the great extent of the clearings, I suppose, so that snow

does not lie, now-a-days, as it did then, and does not begin for nearly a month later. I have often heard Canadians deploring the change in this respect, as, indeed, they well may in the rougher parts of the country, for the winter snow, by filling up the holes in the roads and freezing the wet places, as well as by its smooth surface, enables them to bring heavy loads of all kinds to market, from places which are wholly shut up at other seasons, if they had the leisure to employ in that way, at any other, which they have not. The snow is, consequently, as welcome in Canada as the summer is elsewhere, and a deficiency of it is a heavy loss. When we first settled, the quantity that fell was often very great, and as none melted, except during the periodical thaw in January, the accumulation became quite formidable by spring. It was never so bad, however, by any means, as at Quebec, where the houses have flights of steps up to the door to let folks always get in and out through the winter, the doors being put at high snow-mark, if I may so speak. I have sometimes seen the stumps quite hidden and the fences dwarfed to a very Lilliputain height; but, of late years, there have been some winters when there has hardly been enough to cover the ground, and the wheat has in many parts been killed, to a large extent, by the frost and thaws, which it cannot stand when uncovered. People in Britain often make great mistakes about the appearance of Canada in winter,

thinking, as I remember we did, that we should have almost to get down to our houses through the snow for months together. The whole depth may often, now-a-days, in the open country, be measured by inches, though it still keeps up its old glory in the bush, and lies for months together, instead of melting off in a few days, as it very frequently does round the towns and cities. I remember an account of the Canadian climate given by a very witty man, now dead, Dr. Dunlop, of Lake Huron, as the report sent home respecting it by an Englishman to his friends, whom he informed, that for four months in the year you were up to the neck in mud; for four more, you were either burned up by the heat or stung to death by mosquitoes, and, for the other four, if you managed to get your nose above the snow it was only to have it bitten off by the frost. All the evils thus arrayed are bad enough, but the writer's humor joined with his imagination in making an outrageous caricature when he spoke thus. A Frenchman, writing about England, would perhaps say as much against its climate, and perhaps with a nearer approach to truth. I remember travelling with one in the railway from Wolverhampton to London, on a very bad day in winter, whose opinion of the English climate was, "cleemate, it's no cleemate — it's only yellow fogue." Robert Southey, as true an Englishman as ever lived, in the delightful letters published in his life, constantly abuses it in a most

extraordinary way, and I suppose there are others who abuse that of every other country in which they chance to live. We can have nothing just as we would like it, and must always set the bright side over against the dark. For my part, I think that, though Canada has its charms at some seasons, and redeeming points in all, there is no place like dear Old England, in spite of its fogs and drizzle, and the colds they bring in their train.

The question often rises respecting the climate in America, since it has grown so much milder in comparatively few years, whether it will ever grow any thing like our own in its range of cold and heat. That many countries have changed greatly within historical periods is certain. The climate of England, in the days of the Norman conquest, is thought by many to have been like that of Canada now. Horace hints at ice and snow being no strangers at Rome in the time of Augustus. Cæsar led his army over the frozen Rhone; and, as to Germany, the description of its climate in Tacitus is fit to make one shiver. But we have, unfortunately, an opportunity afforded us by the case of New England, of seeing that two hundred years' occupation of an American province, though it may lessen the quantity of snow, has no effect in tempering the severity of the cold in winter, or abating the heat in summer. Connecticut and Massachusetts are as cold as Canada, if not colder, and yet they are long-settled countries. The great

icy continent to the north forbids the hope of Canada ever being, in any strict sense of the term, temperate. Even in the open prairies of Wisconsin and Iowa, the blasts that sweep from the awful Arctic deserts are keen beyond the conception of those who never felt them. It is the fact of Britain being an island that has made the change in its case, the wind that blows over the sea being always much cooler in summer and warmer in winter than that which blows over land.

I have spoken of the beautiful effect of the hoar-frost on the forest; that of the snow is equally striking. It is wonderful how much manages to get itself heaped up on the broad branches of pines and cedars, and even on the bare limbs and twigs of other trees, making the landscape look most amazingly wintry. But I don't think any one in Canada ever heard of such a quantity lodging on them as to make such an occurrence as Mrs. Mary Somerville quotes from some traveller in her "Physical Geography," where she tells us that the weight of it on the broad fronds of the pine-trees is so great, that, when the wind rises and sways them to and fro, they often tumble against each other with such force as to overthrow great numbers, over large tracts of country. Such "ice-storms," as she calls them, I never heard of, nor did I ever meet with any one who did. Indeed, I rather think them impossible, from the mere fact that, though the force with which the first tree struck the second might be enough to

throw *it* down, that of the second would be much weaker on a third, and thus the destruction would cease almost at once, instead of spreading far and wide. It must be some curious and incorrect version of the terrible tornadoes of summer which she has quoted.

The snow itself used to give me constant pleasure in looking at it minutely. The beautiful shapes you see in the kaleidoscope are not more wonderful than those of the crystals of which it was made up. Stars, crosses, diamonds, and I know not what other shapes, as large almost as a shilling, shone round you in millions when the sun sent his glittering light on them, except in very cold weather, for then the snow was only a dry powder. What a wonderful thing crystallization is! If you think of it for a moment you will be amazed and awed, for it brings us as if face to face with God. How is it that the particles of snow range themselves in the most perfect forms, far more beautifully than any jeweller could make the most costly ornament? There is never an error — never any thing like a failure. Every atom of the dead cold snow has a law impressed on it by God, by which it takes its proper place in building up those fairy spangles and jewels. Can any thing be more exquisite than the crystals we find in the rocks? Yet they are built up of atoms too small for even the microscope to detect, and are always exactly the same shape in the same kind of crystal. Philosophers think that the

particles of each kind of crystal have each the perfect shape which the whole crystal assumes; but if this be so, it makes the matter still more wonderful, for what shall we think of atoms, which no magnifying power can make visible, being carved and pierced and fretted into the most lovely shapes and patterns? The great power of God is, I think, shown even more wonderfully in the smallest than in the largest of His works. The miracles of his creative skill are lavished almost more profusely on its least than on its larger productions, in animate as well as inanimate nature. The crystalline lens of a cod's eye — that is, the central hard part of it, which is very little larger than a pea, and is quite transparent — was long thought to have no special wonder in its structure; but the microscope has shown latterly, that what appeared a mere piece of hard jelly, is made up of five millions of distinct fibres, which are locked into each other by sixty-two thousand millions of teeth! The grasshopper has two hundred and seventy horny teeth, set in rows in his gizzard. A quarto volume has been written on the anatomy of the earth-worm. At Bilin, in Hungary, there is a kind of stone which the great microscopist — or histologist, as the phrase sometimes is — Dr. Ehrenberg, has found to consist, nearly altogether, of creatures so small that three hundred and thirty millions of them make a piece only about twice the size of one of the dice used in backgammon, and yet each of these creatures is covered with

a coat of mail delicately carved all over. What can be more lovely than the way in which the little feathers are laid on a butterfly's wing, in such charming spots and bars of different colors? I was looking some time since at a butterfly, which was of the most perfect azure blue when you looked down on it, but changed, when you saw it sideways, from one shade to another, and asked an entomologist how it was it had so many different tints, taking nearly every color by turns. It is by the wonderful arrangement of the feathers, it seems, all this is done, the way in which they are laid on the wings being such as to break the rays of light into all these colors, according to the angle at which it is held to the eye. How wonderful the Being whose very smallest works are so perfect!

The snow in cold countries is very different in appearance at different times, as I have already intimated. In comparatively mild weather it falls and lies in large soft flakes; but in very cold weather it comes down almost in powder, and crackles below the feet at each step. The first showers seldom lie, the air being too warm as yet; indeed, warm, comfortable days sometimes continue quite late. I remember one November, when we were without fires, even in the middle of it, for some days together; and in one extraordinary December, ploughs were actually going on Christmas-day; but this was as great a wonder as a Canadian frost would be in England. The first winter, enough fell in Novem-

ber to cover all the stumps in our field, which we did not see again for many weeks. The depth of the snow must have been at least a yard. In the woods, there was only a dead level of snow, instead of the rough flooring of fallen logs and broken branches. At first we could not stir through it for the depth, and had to make a path to the barn and to the road; but after a time a thaw came for a day or so, and some rain fell, and then the surface of the snow froze so firmly that even the oxen could walk over it in any direction without breaking through.

The falling of the snow was a great time for the sportsmen of our household, for the deer were then most easily killed, the snow, while soft, showing their tracks, and also making them less timid, by forcing them to seek far and near for their food. Our rifles were, consequently, put in the best order as soon as the ground was white; and each of us saw, in imagination, whole herds of stags which he had brought down. Frederic, who had been left in Toronto, having suffered in health by the confinement of his office, had given it up, and had joined us some time before this, so that there were now five of us, besides my two sisters. We had three rifles and one gun, the rifle which David carried being an especially good one. But he was the poorest shot of us all, and Robert was too nervous to be sure of his aim; but Henry was as cool before a stag as if it had been a rabbit. We were all in a state of

great eagerness to commence, and had already looked out white clothes to put on over our ordinary suit, that we might be more like the snow ; an extra supply of bullets and powder had been put into our pouches and flasks ; and we had pestered every one, for weeks before, with every possible question as to what we were to do when we set out. On the eventful day, my brothers, Robert, Henry, and David, got their rifles on their shoulders immediately after breakfast, and, having determined on taking each a different road, struck into the woods as each thought best. Shortly before dark we heard David's voice in the clearing, and, soon after, Robert and Henry made their appearance. We were all out in a moment to see what they had got, but found them by no means disposed to be talkative about their adventures. We gradually learned, however, that they had all had a hard day's trudge through the rough, wearisome woods, and that Robert had had one good chance through the day, but was so flustered when the deer sprang away through the tree, that he could not raise his rifle in time, and had fired rather at where it had been than at where it was. David declared that he had walked forty miles, he supposed, and had seen nothing, though, if he had seen only as much as a buck's tail, he was sure he would have brought it down. Henry said that, do his best, he could not get near enough, what with the wind and the crackling of something or

other. The fact was that they were raw hands, and needed some training, and had had to suffer the usual penalty of over-confidence, in reaping only disappointment. They felt this indeed so much, that it was some time before they would venture out alone again, preferring to accompany an old hunter who lived near us, until they had caught the art from him. Henry went out with an Indian, also, once, and thus gradually became able to manage by himself. He had the honor of killing the first deer, and setting up the trophy of its horns. He had walked for hours, thinking every little while he saw something through the trees, but had been disappointed, until, towards midday, when, at last, he came upon a couple browsing on the tender tips of the brush, at a long distance from him. Then came the hardest part of the day's work, to get within shot of them without letting them hear or smell him. He had to dodge from tree to tree, and would look out every minute to see if they were still there. Several times the buck pricked its ears, and looked all round it, as if about to run off, making him almost hold his breath with anxiety lest it should do so ; but, at last, he got near enough, and taking a good aim at it from behind a tree, drew the trigger. A spring forward, and a visible momentary quiver, showed that he had hit it ; but it did not immediately fall, but ran off with the other through the woods. Instantly dashing out to the spot where it had stood, Henry followed its track, aided by the

blood which every here and there lay on the snow. He thought at first he would con e up with it in a few hundred yards, but it led him a long weary chase of nearly two miles before he got within sight of it. It had continued to run until weakness from the loss of blood had overpowered it, and it lay quite dead when Henry reached it. It was too great a weight for him to think of carrying home himself, so that he determined to cut it up, and hang the pieces on the neighboring branches, till he could come back next morning with some of us and fetch them. Copying the example of the old hunter whom he had made his model, he had taken a long knife and a small axe with him; and, after cutting the throat to let off what blood still remained, the creature being still warm, he was not very long of stripping it of its skin, and hanging up its dismembered body, for preservation from the wolves through the night. This done, he made the best of his way home to tell us his achievement.

Next day, we had a grand banquet on venison-steaks, fried with ham, and potatoes in abundance; and a better dish I think I never tasted. Venison pie, and soup, for days after, furnished quite a treat in the house.

A few days after this, while the winter was hardly as yet fairly begun, David and Henry had gone out to their work on the edge of the woods, when a deer, feeding close to them, lifted up its head, and, looking back at them, turned slowly away.

They were back to the house in a moment for their rifles, and sallied forth after it, following its track to the edge of the creek on our lot, where it had evidently crossed on the ice. David reached the bank first; and, naturally enough, thinking that ce which bore up a large deer would bear him up, stepped on it to continue the pursuit. But he had forgotten that the deer had four legs, and thus pressed comparatively little on any one part, whereas his whole weight was on one spot, and he had only reached the middle when in he went, in a moment, up to his middle in the freezing water. The ducking was quite enough to cool his ardor for that day, so that we had him back to change his clothes as soon as he could get out of his bath and reach the house. Henry got over the stream on a log, and followed the track for some distance further, but gave up the chase on finding it likely to be unavailing.

When we first came to live on the river, the deer were very numerous. One day in the first winter Robert saw a whole herd of them, of some eight or ten, feeding close to the house, among our cattle, on some browse which had been felled for them. Browse, I may say, is the Canadian word for the tender twigs of trees, which are so much liked by the oxen and cows, and even by the horses, that we used to cut down a number of trees, and leave them with the branches on them, for the benefit of our four-footed retainers. On seeing so

grand a chance of bagging two deer at a shot, Robert rushed in for his rifle at once, but before he had got it loaded, although he flustered through the process with incredible haste, and had us all running to bring him powder, ball, and wadding, the prey had scented danger, and were gone.

We had quite an excitement one day by the cry that a stag was swimming across the river. On looking up the stream, there he was, sure enough, with his noble horns and his head out of the water, doing his best to reach the opposite shore. In a few minutes we saw John Courtenay and his boys paddling off in hot haste, in their canoe, in pursuit. Every stroke flashed in the light, and the little craft skimmed the calm water like an arrow. They were soon very close to the great creature, which flew faster than ever, and then a bullet from Courtenay's rifle ended the chase in a moment. The stag was instantly seized to prevent its sinking, and dragged off to the shore by a rope tied round its antlers.

Some people are cruel enough to kill deer in the spring, when their young are with them, and even to kill the young themselves, though they are worth very little when got. One of the neighbors one day wounded a fawn which was following its mother, and as usual ran up to secure and kill it. But to his astonishment, the maternal affection of the doe had so overcome its timidity, that, instead of fleeing the moment it heard the shot, it would

not leave its poor bleeding young one, but turned on him, and made such vigorous rushes towards him, again and again, that it was only by making all kinds of noise he could frighten her far enough back to let him get hold of the fawn at last. I wish that instead of merely running at him, the loving-hearted creature had given him a good hard butt with her head; it would have served him right for such cruelty. Taking away life is only justifiable, I think, when there is some other end than mere amusement in view. To find happiness in destroying that of other living beings is a very unworthy enjoyment, when one comes to think of it. To go out, as I have seen both men and boys do, to shoot the sweet little singing birds in the hedges, or the lark when he is fluttering down, after having filled the air with music, or the slow-flying seagulls, as they sail heavily near the shore, can only give a pleasure so long as those who indulge in it do not reflect on its cruelty. I remember, when a boy, being often very much struck with this, but, more especially, once, when a boy shot a male thrush, as it was bringing home a little worm for its young ones, which would very likely die when their father was killed; and, once, when a man shot a seagull, which fell far out on the water, from which it would often try in vain to rise, but where it would have to float, helpless and in pain, till released by death.

Continued persecution, by every one, at all sea-

sons, has nearly banished the deer from all the settled parts of Canada, for years back. There are game laws now, however, fixing a time, within which, to destroy them is punishable, and it is to be hoped they may do some good. But the rifle is of use only for amusement in all the older districts, and if you want to get sport like that of old times, you must go to the frontier townships, where every thing is yet almost in a state of nature.

The Indians were harder on every kind of game, and still are so, than even the white settlers. They have long ago laid aside the bow and arrow of their ancestors, in every part of Canada, and availed themselves of the more deadly power of firearms. As they have nothing whatever to do, most of their time, and as the flesh of deer is, at once, food, and a means of getting other things, by bartering it for them, and as it suits their natural taste, they used to be, and still are, hunters by profession. One Indian and his son, who had built their wigwam on our lot, in the first years of our settlement, killed in one winter, in about three weeks, no fewer than forty deer, but they spoiled every thing for the rest of the season, as those that escaped them became so terrified that they fled to some other part.

The species of deer common in Canada is the Virginian, and, though not so large as some others, their long, open ears, and graceful tails — longer than those of some other kinds, and inclining to be

bushy — give them a very attractive appearance. The most curious thing about them, as about other deer, was the growth and casting of the stags' horns. It is not till the spring of the second year that the first pair begin to make their appearance, the first sign of their coming being a swelling of the skin over the spots from which they are to rise. The antlers are now budding; for on these spots are the footstalks from which they are to spring, and the arteries are beginning to deposit on them, particle by particle, with great rapidity, the bony matter of which the horns are composed. As the antlers grow, the skin still stretches over them, and continues to do so, till they have reached their full size, and have become quite hard and solid, and forms a beautiful velvet covering, which is, in reality, underneath, nothing but a great tissue of blood-vessels for supplying the necessary circulation. The arteries which run up from the head, through it, are, meanwhile, so large, that they make furrows on the soft horns underneath; and it is these that leave the deeper marks on the horns when hard. When the antlers are full-grown, they look very curious while the velvet is still over them, and are so tender that the deer can, as yet, make no use of them. It must therefore be removed, but not too suddenly, lest the quantity of blood flowing through such an extent of skin should be turned to the brain or some internal organ, and death be the result. Danger is prevented, and the end at the

same time accomplished, by a rough ring of bone being now deposited round the base of the horns where they join the footstalk, notches being left in it, through which the arteries still pass. Gradual ly, however, these openings are contracted by fresh bone being formed round their edges, till at length the arteries are compressed as by a ligature, and the circulation effectually stopped. The velvet now dies, for want of the vital fluid, and peels off, the deer helping to get it off by rubbing its horns against the trees. It was by noticing this process of stopping the arteries in the antlers of stags, that John Hunter, the great anatomist, first conceived the plan of reducing the great swellings of the arteries in human beings which are called aneurisms, by tying them up — a mode which, in certain cases, is found quite effectual. The highest thoughts of genius are thus frequently only new applications of principles and modes of operation which God has established in the humblest orders of nature, from the beginning of the world. Indeed they are al ways so, for we cannot create any absolutely new conception, but must be contented to read and apply wisely the teachings furnished by all things around us. When the velvet is gone, the horns are, at last, perfect, and the stag bears them proudly, and uses them fiercely in his battles with his rivals. But the cutting off the arteries makes them no longer a part of the general system of the animal. They are, thenceforth, only held on to the foot-

stalks by their having grown from them, and, hence, each spring, when a new pair begin to swel up from beneath, the old ones are pushed off and fall away, to make room for others. It is curious to think that such great things as full-grown stags' horns drop off and are renewed every year; but so it is. Beginning with the single horn of the first season, they grow so much larger each season till the seventh, when they reach their greatest size. But, after all, is it any more wonderful that their horns should grow once a year, than that our hair should grow all the time? And is a horn any thing more than hair stuck together?

CHAPTER VII.

Wolves. — My adventure with a bear. — Courtenay's cow and the wolves. — A fright in the woods by night. — The river freezes. — Our winter fires. — Cold, cold, cold! — A winter's journey. — Sleighing. — Winter mufflings. — Accidents through intense cold.

THE wolves used to favor us by howling at nights, close at hand, till the sound made one miserable. We had five sheep destroyed in the barn-yard on one of these occasions, nothing being done to them beyond tearing the throats open and drinking the blood. Perhaps the wolves had been disturbed at their feast. I never heard of any one being killed by them, but they sometimes put benighted travellers in danger. One night, Henry was coming home from a neighbor's, in the bright moonlight, and had almost reached our clearing, when, to his horror, he heard the cry of some wolves behind him, and, feeling sure they wished to make their supper at his expense, he made off, with the fastest heels he could, to a tree that stood by itself, and was easily climbed. Into this he got just in time to save himself, for the wolves were already at the foot of it, when he had made good his seat across a bough. The night was fearfully cold, and he must soon have frozen to death had

he not, providentially, been so near the house As it was, his loud whistling for the dogs, and his shouts, were, fortunately, heard, and some of us sallying out, he was delivered from his perilous position. Wolves are much scarcer now, however, I am thankful to say, owing in part, no doubt, to a reward of two sovereigns which is offered by Government for every head brought in. In the regions north of Canada they seem to abound, and even on the shores of the Arctic Ocean they are found in great numbers. Sir John Franklin, in one of his earlier journeys, often came upon the remains of deer which had been hemmed in by them and driven over precipices. "Whilst the deer are quietly grazing," says he "the wolves assemble in great numbers, and, forming a deep crescent, creep slowly towards the herd, so as not to alarm them much at first; but when they perceive that they have fairly hemmed in the unsuspecting creatures, and cut off their retreat across the plain, they move more quickly, and with hideous yells terrify their prey, and urge them to flight by the only open way, which is toward the precipice, appearing to know that when the herd is at full speed it is easily driven over the cliffs, the rearmost urging on those that are before. The wolves then descend at leisure and feed on the mangled carcasses."

There were some bears in the woods, but they did not trouble us. My sister Margaret and I were

the only two of our family who had an adventure with one, and that ended in a fright. It was in the summer time, and we had strolled out into the woods to amuse ourselves with picking the wild berries, and gathering flowers. I had climbed to the top of the upturned root of a tree, the earth on which was thick with fruit, and my sister was at a short distance behind. Having just got up, I chanced to turn round and look down, when, lo! *there* stood a bear, busy at the raspberries, which he seemed to like as much as we did. You may be certain that the first sight of it was enough. I sprang down in an instant, and, shouting to my sister that there was a bear behind the tree, we both made off homewards with a speed which astonished even ourselves. The poor brute never offered to disturb us, though he might have made a meal of either of us had he chosen, for I don't think we could have run had we seen him really after us.

I had forgotten a story about the wolves, which happened a year or two after our first settling. John Courtenay had a cow which fell sick, and was lying in the field, after night, in the winter time, very likely without any one missing it, or, if they missed it, without their knowing where to find it in the dark. The wolves, however, did not overlook it, for, next morning, poor Cowslip was found killed by them, and its carcass having been left, the family not liking to use it under the circumstances, they held high carnival over it, night after night, till the

bones were picked clean. This happened quite close to the house.

But if there were not many bears and wolves to be *seen*, we were not the less afraid they would pounce on us, when, by any chance, we should happen to be coming through the woods after dark. I remember a young friend and myself being half-frightened in this way one summer evening, when there chanced to be no moon, and we had to walk home, through the great gloomy forest, when it was pitch dark. Before starting, we were furnished with a number of long slips of the bark of the hickory-tree, which is very inflammable, and, having each lighted one, we sallied out on our journey. I shall never forget the wild look of every thing in the flickering light, the circle of darkness closing in round us at a very short distance. But on we went, along the winding path, hither and thither, among the trees. Suddenly an unearthly sound broke from one side, a sort of screech, which was repeated again and again. We took it for granted some bear and her young ones were at hand, but where, it seemed impossible for us to discover. How could we run, in such darkness, over such a path, with lights to carry? Both of us stood still to listen. Again came the "hoo, hoo, hoo;" and I assure you it sounded very loud in the still forest. But, though terrible to me, I noticed that, when distinctly caught, it ceased to alarm my comrade. "It's only a great owl up in the the trees there — what's the

use of being frightened?" he broke out; yet he had been as much so as myself, the moment before. However, we now made up for our panic by a hearty laugh, and went on in quietness to the house.

Toward the end of December the river froze. This was, in great part, caused by large blocks of ice floating down from Lake Superior, and getting caught on the banks, as they went past, by the ice already formed there. For one to touch another, was to make them adhere for the rest of the winter, and, thus, in a very short time after it had begun, the whole surface was as solid as a stone. We had now to cut a hole every morning, with the axe, through the ice, to let the cattle drink, and to get water for the house, and cold work it was. The cattle came down themselves, but when, a year or two afterwards, we got horses, they had to be led twice a day. It was very often my task to take them. Riding was out of the question, from the steepness of the bank, and the way in which their feet balled with the snow, so I used to sally out for them in a thick greatcoat, with the ears of my cap carefully tied down, to prevent frostbites; a thick worsted cravat round my neck, and thick mitts on my hands. The floor of the stable was, invariably, a sheet of ice, and over this I had to get out the two horses, letting the one out over the icy slope at the door, and then holding the halter till the second one had slid past me, when, having closed the door, with hands like the snow, from having had to loosen the

halters, I went down with them. When the wind was from the north they were white in a step or two, with their breath frozen on their chests and sides, the cold making it like smoke as it left their nostrils. Of course *they* were in no hurry, and would put their tails to the wind and drink a minute, and then lift up their heads and look round them at their leisure, as if it were June. By the time they were done, their mouths and chins were often coated with ice, long icicles hanging from the hair all round. Right glad was I when at last I had them fairly back again, and had knocked out the balls of snow from their shoes, to let them stand firm.

The cold did not last all the time, else we could never have endured it. There would be two or three days of hard frost, and then it would come milder for two or three more; but the mildest, except when it was a thaw, in January, were very much colder than any that are common in England, and as to the coldest, what shall I say they were like? The sky was as bright and clear as can be imagined, the snow crackled under foot, and the wind, when there was any, cut the skin like a razor. Indoors, the fire in the kitchen was enough to heat a large hall in a more temperate climate. It was never allowed to go out, the last thing at night being to roll a huge back-log, as they called it, into the fireplace, with handspikes, two of us sometimes having to help to get it into its place.

It was simply a cut of a tree, about four feet long, and of various thicknesses. The two dog-irons having been drawn out, and the embers heaped close to this giant, a number of thinner logs, whole and in parts, were then laid above them, and the fire was "gathered" for the night. By day, what with another huge back-log to replace the one burned up in the night, and a great bank of other smaller "sticks" in front and over it, I think there was often half a cart-load blazing at a time. In fact, the only measure of the quantity was the size of the huge chimney, for the wood cost nothing except the trouble of cutting and bringing it to the house. It was grand to sit at night before the roaring mountain of fire and forget the cold outside; but it was a frightful thing to dress in the morning, in the bitter cold of the bedrooms, with the windows thick with frost, and the water frozen solid at your side. If you touched a tumbler of water with your toothbrush it would often freeze in a moment, and the water in the basin sometimes froze round the edges while we were washing. The tears would come out of our eyes, and freeze on our cheeks as they rolled down. The towels were regularly frozen like a board, if they had been at all damp. Water, brought in over night in buckets, and put as close to the fire as possible, had to be broken with an axe in the morning. The bread, for long after we went to the river, till we got a new house, was like a stone for hardness, and sparkled with

the ice in it. The milk froze on the way from the barn to the house, and even while they were milking. If you went out, your eyelashes froze together every moment with your breath on them, and my brothers' whiskers were always white with frozen breath when they came in. Beef and every thing of the kind were frozen solid for months together, and, when a piece was wanted, it had to be sawn off and put in cold water overnight to thaw it, or hung up in the house. I have known beef that had been on for hours taken out almost raw, from not having been thawed beforehand. One of the coldest nights I remember happened once when I was from home. I was to sleep at the house of a magistrate in the village, and had gone with a minister who was travelling for the British and Foreign Bible Society to attend a meeting he had appointed. It was held in a wooden school-house, with three windows on each side, and a single story high. There was a stove at the end nearest the door, which opened into the room; the pipe of it was carried up to near the roof, and then led along the room to a chimney at the opposite end. The audience consisted of seven or eight men and boys, though the night was magnificent, the stars hanging from the dark blue like sparkling globes of light. The cold, in fact, was so intense that nobody would venture out. When I got in, I found the congregation huddled round the stove, which one of them, seated in front of it, was assidu-

ously stuffing with wood, as often as the smallest chance offered of his being able to add to its contents. The stove itself was as red as the fire inside of it, and the pipe, for more than a yard up, was the same; but our backs were wretchedly cold, notwithstanding, though we sat within a few inches of the glowing iron. As to the windows, the rime on them never thought of melting, but lay thick and hard as ever. How the unfortunate speaker bore his place at the master's desk at the far end I know not. He had only one arm, indeed, but the hand of the other was kept deeply bedded in his pocket all the time. We were both to sleep at the same house, and therefore returned together, and after supper were shown into a double-bedded room with a painted floor, and a great stove in the middle. A delightful roar up the pipe promised comfort for the night, but alas! in a few minutes it died away, the fire having been made of chips instead of substantial billets. Next morning, on waking, looking over to Mr. Thompson, I expressed a hope that he had rested well through the night.

"Rested!" said he; "I thawed a piece my own size last night when I first got in, and have lain in it all night as if it had been my coffin. I daren't put out my leg or my hand; it was like ice up to my body."

One winter I had a dreadful journey of about two hundred miles. We started in the stage, which was an open rough wagon, at seven o'clock

at night, the roads not as yet permitting sleighs. It was in the first week of January. I had on two greatcoats, but there were no buffalo robes to lay over the knees, though the stage should have provided them. All that dreadful dark night I had to sit there, while the horses stumbled on at a walk, and the wagon bumped on the frozen clods most dreadfully. The second day's ride was much better, that part of the road being smoother; but the next day and night — what shall I say of them? I began in a covered sleigh, some time in the forenoon, the distance being seventy miles. There was another person in it besides myself. Off we started at a good pace, but such was the roughness of the road, up one wave of frozen earth and snow, and down another, that both of us were thoroughly seasick in a short time. Each took possession of a window, and getting the head in again was out of the question till the sickness fairly spent itself. Meanwhile, there was a large high wooden box in the sleigh between us, and we had to keep a hand a-piece on it, lest it should take us at unawares, and make a descent on our legs or backs. After a time, the covered sleigh was exchanged for an open one — a great heavy farmer's affair, a mere long box upon runners. To add to our troubles, they put a great black horse, as one of the two to draw us, which was so wild and fierce that I have always thought it must have been mad. It was now dark night, and there were again no buffalo robes, and

the thermometer far below zero. How we stood it I know not. My feet were like ice, and incessant motion of both them and my arms seemed all that could keep me from freezing. But away the black wretch tore, the driver pulling him back as he could, but in vain. At last, at two or three in the morning, bang went the sleigh against some stump, or huge lump of frozen mud, and — broke down. "You'll have to get out, gentlemen," said the driver. "You had better walk on to the first house, and I'll go before you and borrow a sleigh." Here then we were, turned out to stumble over a chaos of holes and hillocks for nearly two miles, in darkness, and in such a night! I don't know how long we were, but we reached a wayside inn at last, where the driver borrowed what he could get to carry us and the mails to the journey's end, and having gone back for the bags and his parcels, and that horrid box, to where he had left the broken vehicle at the roadside, he reappeared after a time, and we finished our journey, tired and cold enough, a little before daylight.

The amount of suffering from the cold, seldom, however, reaches any painful extent; indeed, you will hear people say, on every hand, that they positively like it, except when it is stormy, or when the wind blows very keenly. Nor does it hinder work of any kind, where there is exercise enough. You may see men chopping in the forest on terribly cold days, with their jackets off, the swinging

of the arms making them disagreeably hot in spite of the weather. Sleighing is, moreover, the great winter amusement of the Canadian, who seems never so pleased as when driving fast in a "cutter," with the jingling bells on the horse's neck making music as it goes. But, for my part, I could never bear sitting with my face to the wind, while I was dragged through it at the rate of ten miles an hour, with the thermometer below zero. All the mufflings you can put on won't protect the cheeks or the eyes, and the hands get intolerably cold holding the reins. Indeed, the precautions taken by those who have much travelling about in winter, show that, to those less fully prepared, there must be suffering as well as enjoyment. Our doctor's outfit for his winter practice used to amuse me. He had, first, a huge otter fur cap, with ears; next, over his greatcoat, the skin of a buffalo made into a coat, with the hairy side out, and reaching to his feet; his feet were cased in moccasins, which came over his boots and tied round the ankles; a pair of great hose reached up his thighs; his hands were muffled in huge fur gauntlets reaching half way to his elbow; and when he took his seat in the sleigh with all his wrapping, he sat down on a buffalo-skin spread over the seat, and stretching down over the bottom, while another was tucked in over him, his feet resting on the lower edge of it to keep out every breath of air; and, in addition, he always had hot bricks put inside on starting, and re-heated them every short while.

No wonder he used to say that he felt quite comfortable. He had clothes and furs enough on him for Greenland. In spite of all this, however, I remember his driving back, home, in great haste one day, with his wife and child, and found that the face of the infant had been partially frozen in a ride of four or five miles. Cases of death from the excessive cold are not infrequent. A drunken man, falling on the road, is certain to die if not speedily found. A poor Indian was frozen to death on the river in this way a short time after we came. But even the most sober people are sometimes destroyed by the awful intensity of the cold. I knew a young widow who had lost her husband in this way. He had gone to town in his sleigh, one Christmas, on business, and was returning, when he felt very cold, and turned aside to heat himself at a farm-house. Poor fellow! he was already so frozen that he died shortly after coming to the fire. This last winter, a farmer and his daughter were driving in from the country to Toronto, and, naturally enough, said little to each other, not caring to expose their faces; but when they had reached the city and should have alighted, to her horror the daughter found that her father was stone dead, frozen at her side by the way. At Christmas there are a great many shooting-matches, at which whoever kills most pigeons, let loose from a trap, at a certain distance, wins a turkey. I was one day riding past one of these, and noticed a group of spectators standing round, but thought no more

of it, till, next morning, I learned that, when the match was done and the people dispersed, a boy was seen who continued to stand still on the vacant ground, and, on going up to him, it was found that he had been frozen stiff, and was stone dead. A minister once told me that he had been benighted on a lonely road in the depth of the winter and could get no further, and, for a time, hardly knew what to do. At last he resolved to take out his horse, and, after tying its two fore legs together, let it seek what it could for itself till morning, while he himself commenced walking round a great tree that was near, and continued doing so, without resting, till the next morning. Had he sat down, he would have fallen asleep; and if he had slept, he would certainly have died. My brother Henry, who, after a time, turned to the study of medicine, and has risen to be a professor in one of the colleges, took me, one day, to the hospital, with him, and, turning into one of the wards, walked up to the bed of a young man. Lifting up the bottom of the clothes, he told me to look; and, — what a sight! both the feet had been frozen off at the ankle, and the red stumps were slowly healing. A poor man called, once, begging, whose fingers were all gone. He had walked some miles without gloves, and had known nothing about how to manage frozen limbs; his fingers had frozen, had been neglected, and had mortified, till at last such as did not drop off were pulled out, he told me, with pincers, being utterly

rotten at the joints. I know a young man, a law student, whose fingers are mere bone and skin : he was snow-balling, and paid the penalty in the virtual destruction of his hands. A curious case happened some years ago, resulting in the recovery of two thousand pounds of damages from the mail company. The stage from Montreal, westward, broke through an airhole on the St. Lawrence, when driving over the ice, and all the passengers were immersed in the river, one of them getting both his hands so frozen that he lost them entirely. They were both taken off at the wrists. The money was a poor consola tion for such a calamity. I have known of a gen tleman losing both hands by taking off his fur gloves to get better control over a runaway horse. He got it stopped, but his hands were lost in the doing it.

The ice of the river used to give us abundant room for skating, where it was smooth enough. Near the towns every one skates, even the ladies, of late years, doing their best at it. But the ice, with us, was often too rough for this graceful and healthy exercise, so that it was less practised than it otherwise would have been.

CHAPTER VIII.

The aurora borealis. — "Jumpers." — Squaring timber. — Rafts. — Camping out. — A public meeting. — Winter fashions. — My toe frozen. — A long winter's walk. — Hospitality. — Nearly lost in the woods.

THE grandeur of the aurora borealis, in the cold weather, particularly struck us. At times the whole heavens would be irradiated by it — shafts of light stretching from every side to the zenith, or clouds of brightness, of the softest rose, shooting, from every point of the horizon, high overhead. It was like the Hindoo legend of Indra's palace, which Southey describes so beautifully:

> "Even we on earth at intervals descry
> Gleams of the glory, streaks of flowing light,
> Openings of Heaven, and streams that flash at night,
> In fitful splendor, through the northern sky."
>
> *Curse of Kehama,* vii. 72.

The fondness of almost every one for sleigh-riding was ludicrously shown in the contrivances invented in some cases to get the enjoyment of the luxury. The richer settlers, of course, had very comfortable vehicles, with nice light runners, and abundance of skins of various kinds, to adorn them,

and make them warm; but every one was not so fortunate, and yet all were determined that ride they would. "Have you any thing to go in?" I have heard asked, once and again, with the answer, "No, but I guess we can rig up a jumper pretty soon." This "jumper," when it made its appearance, if it were of the most primitive type, consisted simply of two long poles, with the bark on them, the one end to drag on the ground, and the other to serve for shafts for the horse; a cross-bar here and there behind, let into them through auger-holes, serving to keep them together. An old box, fixed on roughly above, served for a body to the carriage; and, then, off they went, scraping along the snow in a wonderful way. Instead of buffalo-robes, if they had none, a colored bed-quilt, wrapped round them, served to keep them warm. An old wood-sleigh, with a box on it, was something more aristocratic; but any thing that would merely hold them was made to pass muster. With plenty of trees at hand, and an axe and auger, a backwoodsman never thinks himself unprovided while the snow continues.

It is in the winter that the great work of cutting and squaring timber, in the forests, for export to Europe, is done. Millions of acres, covered with the noblest trees, invite the industry of the wealthier merchants by the promise of liberal profit, along the whole edge of Canada, toward the north, from the Ottawa to Lake Huron. What the quantity of

timber this vast region contains must be, may be estimated in some measure from the report of the Crown Land Commissioner, a few years since, which says, that in the Ottawa district alone, there is enough to answer every demand for the next six hundred years, if they continue felling it at the present rate. There is no fear, assuredly, of wood running short in Canada for many a day. The rafts brought down from Lake Huron alone are wonderful — thousands on thousands of immense trees, squared so as to lie closely together, each long enough, apparently, to be a mast for a large vessel. I have looked over the wilderness of the forest from two points — the one, the limestone ridge that runs from Niagara northward — the other, from the top of the sand-hills on the edge of Lake Huron — and no words can tell the solemn grandeur of the prospect in either case. Far as the eye could reach there was nothing to be seen but woods — woods — woods — a great sea of verdure, with a billowy roll, as the trees varied in height, or the lights and shadows played on them. It is said that the open desert impresses the traveller with a sense of its sublimity that is almost overpowering — the awful loneliness, the vast, naked, and apparently boundless sweep of the horizon on every side, relieved by no life or motion, or even variety of outline, subduing all alike. But I question if the sight of an American forest be not equally sublime. The veil cast by the trees over the land

scape they adorn; the dim wonder what may live beneath them, what waters flow, what lakes sparkle the consciousness that you look on nature in her own unprofaned retreats; that before a white man had seen these shores the summer had already waked this wondrous spectacle of life and beauty, year after year, for ages; the thoughts of mystery prompted by such "a boundless deep immensity of shade;" the sense of vastness, inseparable from the thought that the circle of your horizon, which so overpowers you, sweeps on, in equal grandeur, over boundless regions — all these and other thoughts fill the mind with awe and tenderness.

The district in which, chiefly, "lumber men," strickly so called, ply their vocation, is on the Upper Ottawa, where vast tracts of pine and other trees are leased from Government by merchants in Quebec, Montreal, and elsewhere. For these gloomy regions vast numbers of lumberers set out from Kingston and Ottawa in the autumn, taking with them their winter's provision of pork, flour, &c.; and building "shanties" for themselves — that is, rough huts, to live in through the long winter — as soon as they reach their limits. Intensely severe as the cold is, they do not care for it. Sleeping at nights with their feet to the fire, and "roughing" it by day as no laborers would think of doing in England, they keep up the highest spirits and the most vigorous health. To fell and square the trees is only part of their labor; they

must also drag them, over the snow, to the river by oxen, and join them into rafts after getting them to it. To form these, a large number of logs are laid closely, side by side, and lashed together by long, thin, supple rods, tied round pins driven into them, and further secured by transverse poles pinned down on them; and they are then floated as rafts toward the St. Lawrence, which they gradually reach, after passing, by means of contrivances called "slides," over the rough places, where the channel is broken into rapids. As they go down, poling or sailing, or shooting the slides, their course is enlivened by the songs and shouts of the crew, and very exciting it is to see and hear them. Once in the broad, smooth water, several smaller rafts are often joined together, and every thing carefully prepared for finally setting out for the lower ports. Even from their starting, they are often rigged out with short masts and sails, and houses are built on them, in which the crew take up their abode during the voyage. When they are larger, quite a number of sails are raised, so that they form very striking objects, when slowly gliding down the river, a rude steering-apparatus behind guiding the vast construction.*

It is wonderful how men stand the exposure of the winter in the forests as they do. Indeed, a fine

* On the upper lakes, the crew often take their wives and children, with their poultry, etc., on the rafts with them.

young fellow, a friend of mine, a surveyor, told me that he liked nothing better than to go off to the depths of the wilderness in the fall, and "camp out" amidst the snows, night after night, till the spring thaws and the growth of the leaves forced an intermission of the work of his profession. An adventure that happened to a party who had, on one occasion, to travel some distance along a river-bed, in winter, is only a sample of what is continually met with, beyond the settled parts of the country. There were seven or eight of them in all, including two half-breeds, whom they had employed, partly as guides, and partly to draw their slight luggage, on hand sleighs, over the ice. The whole party had to wear snow-shoes, to keep them from sinking into the soft snow, which had drifted, in many places, to a great depth; and this itself, except to experienced hands, is at once very exhausting and painful. The snow-shoe is simply a large oval frame of light wood, crossed with a netting, on which the foot rests, and to which it is strapped, the extent of surface thus presented enabling the wearer to pass safely over drifts, in which, otherwise, he would at once sink. Starting at the first break of the dawn, they plodded on as well as they could, the ankles and knees of some of them getting more and more painful at every step with the weight of the great snow-shoes underneath. It was no use attempting to pick their steps in such a depth of snow, so that they had to take their chance of getting on to some un-

safe part of the ice at any moment. Meanwhile, the sky got darker and more lowering, until, at last, it broke into a snow-storm so heavy, that they could hardly see one another at a few yards' distance. The wind, which was very strong, blew directly in their faces, and howled wildly through the trees on each side, whirling the drift in thick clouds in every direction. Still they held on as well as they could, in moody silence, till, at last, it was evident to all that they must give up the struggle, and make as good an encampment as they could, for the night, where they were. Turning aside, therefore, into the forest, where a dark stretch of pine-trees promised protection, they proceeded to get ready their resting-place. With the help of their axes, a maple was soon felled, and large pieces of bark, from the fallen trees around, formed shovels, by which a square spot of ground was cleared of the snow. A fire was the next great subject of interest, and this they obtained by rubbing some of the fibrous bark of the white cedar to powder, and laying over it first thin peelings of birch-bark, and then the bark itself, a match sufficing to set the pile in a blaze, and the whole forest offering fuel. Piling log on log into a grand heap, the trees around were soon lighted up with a glow that shone far and near. To protect themselves from the snow, which was still falling, a quantity of spruce-boughs were next laid overhead on the rampart of snow which had been banked up round them to the height of

nearly five feet, the cold of the day being so great, that the fierce fire, blazing close at hand, made no impression on it whatever. Slices of salt pork, toasted on a stick at the fire, having been got ready by some, and broth, cooked in a saucepan, by others, they now took their comfort, as best they could, in a primitive supper, logs round the fire serving for seats. After this came their tobacco-pipes and a long smoke, and then each of the party lay down with his feet to the fire, and slept, covered with snow, till daylight next morning. This is the life led, week after week, by those whose avocations call them to frequent the forests during winter; nor are the comforts of some of the poorer settlers in new districts, while they live in "shanties," at their first coming, much greater, nor their exposure much less.

A public meeting, held in the next township, gave us an opportunity of seeing the population of a wide district in all the variety of winter costume. We went in a neighbor's sleigh, drawn by a couple of rough horses, whose harness, tied here and there with rope, and unprovided with any thing to keep the traces from falling down, or the sleigh from running on the horses' heels, looked as unsafe as possible. But Canadian horses know how to act under such circumstances, as if they had studied them, and had contrived the best plan for avoiding unpleasant results. They never walked down any descent, but, on coming to any gully, dashed down the icy slope at a hard gallop, and, flying across the

logs which formed a bridge at the bottom, tore up the opposite ascent, till forced to abate their speed by the weight of the vehicle. Then came the driver's part to urge them up the rest of the acclivity by every form of threatening and persuasion in the vocabulary of his craft; and the obstacle once surmounted, off we were again at a smart trot. It was rather mild weather, however, for comfortable sleighing, the snow in deep places being little better than slush, through which it was heavy and slow work to drag us. At others, the ground was well nigh bare, and then the iron-shod runners of the sleigh gave us most unpleasant music as they grated on the stones and gravel. As to shaking and jumbling, there was enough of both, as often as we struck on a lump of frozen snow, or some other obstruction; but, at last, we got to our journey's end. The village was already thronged by numbers who had come from all parts, for it was a political meeting, and all Canadians are politicians. Such costumes as some exhibited are surely to be seen nowhere else. One man, I noticed, had a suit made of drugget carpeting, with a large flower on a bright-green ground for pattern, one of the compartments of it reaching from his collar far down his back. Blanket coats of various colors, tied round the waist with a red sash, buffalo coats, fur caps of all sizes and shapes, moccasins, or coarse Wellington's, with the trowser-legs tucked into them, mitts, gloves, and fur gauntlets, added variety to the picture. Almost

every one was smoking, at some time or other. The sleighs were ranged, some under the shed of the village tavern, others along the sides of the street, the horses looking like nondescript animals, from the skins and coverlets thrown over them to protect them from the cold. The "bar" of the tavern was the great attraction to many, and its great blazing fire, on which a cartload of wood glowed with exhilarating heat, to others. Every one on entering, after desperate stamping and scraping, to get the snow from the feet, and careful brushing of the legs with a broom, to leave as little as possible for melting, made straight to it, holding up each foot by turns to get it dried, as far as might be. There was no pretence at showing deference to any one; a laborer had no hesitation in taking the only vacant seat, though his employer were left standing. "Treating" and being "treated" went on with great spirit at the bar, mutual strangers asking each other to drink as readily as if they had been old friends. Wine-glasses were not to be seen, but, instead, tumblers were set out, and "a glass was left to mean what any one chose to pour into them. One old man I saw put his hand in a knowing way round his tumbler, to hide his filling it to the brim; but he proved to be a confirmed and hopeless drunkard, who had already ruined himself and his family, and was able to get drunk only at the expense of others.

We stayed for a time to listen to the speeches, which were delivered from a small balcony before

the window of the tavern, but were very uninteresting to me, at least, though the crowd stood patiently in the snow to hear them. I confess I was glad when our party thought they had heard enough, and turned their sleigh homewards once more.

I had the misfortune to get one of my great toes frozen in the second or third winter. We were working at the edge of the woods, repairing a fence which had been blown down. The snow was pretty deep, and I had been among it some hours, and did not feel colder than usual, my feet being every day as cold as lead, whenever I was not moving actively about. I had had my full measure of stamping and jumping to try to keep up the circulation, and had no suspicion of anything extra, till, on coming home, having taken off my stockings to heat myself better, to my consternation, the great toe of my left foot was as white as wax — the sure sign that it was frozen. Heat being of all things the most dangerous in such circumstances, I had at once to get as far as possible from the fire, while some one brought me a large basin of snow, with which I kept rubbing the poor stiff member for at least an hour before it came to its right hue. But what shall I say of the pain of returning circulation? Freezing is nothing, but thawing is agony. It must be dreadful indeed where the injury has been extensive. Even to this day, notwithstanding all my rubbing, there is still a tender spot

in the corner of my boot on cold days. It was a mercy I noticed it in time, for had I put my feet to the fire without first thawing it, I might have had serious trouble, and have lost it, after great suffering. A gentleman I knew, who got his feet frozen in 1813, in marching with his regiment from Halifax, in Nova Scotia, to Niagara — a wonderful achievement in the depth of winter, through an uninhabited wilderness buried in snow — never perfectly recovered the use of them, and walked lame to the day of his death.

In our early days in Canada, the sacred duty of hospitality was observed with a delightful readiness and freeness. A person who had not the means of paying might have travelled from one end of the country to another, without requiring money, and he would everywhere have found a cheerful welcome. The fact was that the sight of a strange face was a positive relief from the monotony of everyday life, and the news brought by each visitor was felt to be as pleasant to hear, as the entertainment could be for him to receive. But selfish thoughts did not, after all, dim the beautiful openhandedness of backwoods hospitality. No thought of any question or doubt rose in the matter — to come to the door was to rest for the night, and share the best of the house. I was once on my way westward to the St. Clair, from London, Canada West, just in the interval between the freezing of the roads and the fall of the snow. The stage

could not run, nor was travelling by any kind of vehicle practicable; indeed, none could have survived the battering it would have got, had it been brought out. As I could not wait doing nothing for an indefinite time, till snow made sleighing possible, which I was told by the stage proprietor "might be a week, might be a fortnight," I determined to walk the sixty miles as best I could.

But such roads! As to walking, it was impossible; I had rather to leap from one hillock of frozen mud to another, now in the middle, now at each side, by turns. There was a little snow, which only made my difficulties greater, clogging the feet, and covering up holes. For yards together, the road had been washed away by the rains, and its whole surface was dotted with innumerable little frozen lakes, where the water had lodged in the huge cups and craters of mud which joined each other in one long network the whole way. It was a dreadful scramble, in which daylight was absolutely necessary to save broken legs. No man could have got over it in the dark. In the early afternoon, I reached a tavern at the roadside and had dinner, but as I was told that there was another, seven miles ahead, I thought I could reach it before night, and thus get so much nearer my journey's end. But I had reckoned beyond my powers, and darkness fell while I was as yet far from my goal. Luckily, a little log-house at a distance, showed itself near the road by the light

through its windows. Stumbling toward it as I best could, I told them how I was benighted, and asked if I could get shelter till morning.

"Come in, sir," said the honest proprietor, "an' you're welcome." He proved to be a decent shoemaker; a young man, with a tidy young woman for his wife; and as I entered, he beckoned me to be seated, while he continued at his work on an old shoe, by the help of a candle before him.

"Bad roads," said I.

"Oh, very," answered my host. "I never puts any man away from my door; nobody could get to the tavern over sich roads as them. Take your coat off, and make yourself comfortable."

I did as I was told, and chatted with the couple about all the ordinary topics of backwoods conversation — the price of land — the last crops — how long he had been there, and so on, till tea, or, as they called it, supper; for Canadians generally take only three meals a day. And a right hearty meal I made, from a display of abundance of snowy bread, excellent butter, ham in large slices, and as much tea as there might be water in the kettle, for tea is the weak point in bush fare. When bedtime came, I found there was only one bed in the house, and could not imagine how they were to do with me; but this was soon solved by their dragging the feather bed off, and bringing it out where I was, from the inner room, and spreading it on the fl or opposite the fire. Nothing would induce them to

keep it for themselves and give me anything else; I was their guest, and they would have me entertained as well as they could. Next morning, a famous breakfast was got ready, and I was again made to sit down with them. But not a word would the honest fellow hear about money. "He would never be the worse for giving a bed and a meal to a traveller, and I was very welcome." So I had to thank them very sincerely and bid them good-day, with their consciousness of having done a kindness as their only reward. On this second day's journey, I had the most awkward mishap that ever befell me in the woods. I was all but lost in them, and that just as the sun was about to set. The roads were so frightful that I could hardly get on, and hence, when the landlord of one of the wayside taverns told me I would save some miles by cutting through the bush at a point he indicated, I was very glad to follow his advice. But trees are all very much alike, and by the time I got to where he told me to leave the road, I must have become confused; for when I did leave it, not a sign of any track showed itself, far or near. I thought I could find it, however, and pushed on, as I fancied, in the direction that had been pointed out to me. But, still, no road made its appearance, and, finally, in turning round to look for it, I forgot which way to set myself, on again starting. In fact I was lost, fairly lost. I had got into a wide cedar-swamp, the water in which was only

slightly frozen, so that I had to leap from the root of one tree to that of another. Not a sound was to be heard, nor a living creature to be seen. Only trees, trees, trees, black and unearthly in the lessening light. I hardly knew what to do. If forced to stay there all night, I might — indeed, I would likely — be frozen to death: but how to get out? That I ultimately did, I know, but by no wisdom of mine. There was absolutely nothing to guide me. My deliverance was the merciful result of having by chance struck a slight track, which I forthwith followed, emerging at last, not, as I had hoped, some miles ahead, but a long way behind where I had entered.

CHAPTER IX.

Involuntary racing. — A backwoods' parsonage. — Graves in the wilderness. — Notions of equality. — Arctic winters. — Ruffed grouse. — Indian fishing in winter. — A marriage. — Our winter's pork.

AMONG our occasional visitors, we had, one year, at one time, no fewer than three ministers, who chanced to be on some Home Missionary Society business in our quarter, and very nice company they were. Some of their stories of the adventures that befel them in their journeys amused us greatly. One was a stout, hearty Irishman, the two others Englishmen ; and what with the excitement of fresh scenes every day, and the healthy open air, of which they had perhaps too much, they were all in high spirits. At one part they had crossed a tract of very rolling land, where the road was all up one slope and down another, and this, as every thing happened at the time to be one great sheet of ice, was no pleasant variety to their enjoyments. There was too little snow for sleighing, and yet, to ride down these treacherous descents in a wheeled conveyance, was impossible. At the top of an extra long one they had therefore determined,

not only to get out, but to take the horses out, one of them leading them down, while the other two brought down the vehicle. It was a large, double-seated affair, with four wheels, and a pole for two horses; and it was thought that the best plan to to get it down safely was for one of the two to go to the tongue of the pole in front, while the other held back behind. Every thing thus arranged, at a given signal the first movement over the edge of the slope was made, and all went well enough for a few steps. But the worthy man behind soon felt that he had no power whatever, with such slippery footing, to retard the quickening speed of the wheels, while the stout Irishman, who chanced to be at the front, felt, no less surely, that he could neither let his pole go, nor keep it from driving him forward at a rate to which he was wholly unaccustomed. "Stop it, Brooks — I'll be killed! — it'll be over me!" "I can't stop it," passed and repassed in a moment, and, at last, poor Mr. Brook's feet having gone from under him, the whole affair was consigned to his Irish friend, whom the increasing momentum of his charge was making fly down the hill at a most unclerical rate. "I'll be killed! I'm sure it'll be over me!" was heard to rise from him as he dashed away into the hollow beneath. His two friends not only could do nothing to help him, but could not move for laughing, mixed with anxiety, till at last the sufferer managed to find relief when he had been carried a considerable way up the next slope.

One of the three wore a contrivance over his fur cap in travelling, which, so far as I have noticed, was unique. It was made of brown Berlin wool, much in the shape of one of the helmets of the Knights Templars, in the Temple Church, the only opening being for part of the face, while what you might call its tails hung down over his shoulder. He looked very much like one of the men in the dress for going down in a diving-bell, when it was on him, his head standing out like a huge ball from his shoulders. Their entertainment was, it appeared, sometimes strange enough. One gave an account of a night he had spent in a backwoods' parsonage, where the mice had run over his pillow all night, the only furniture in his room, besides the bed, being some pieces of bacon and a bit of cheese. He had had the only spare room in the house, which, in fact, in the absence of guests, served as a store-room. Nor was this the worst; though it was in the depth of winter, he could see the stars through chinks of the roof as he lay, and snow having come on in the night, he found it lying deep on his coverlet when he awoke. What some clergymen suffer in the poorer districts must, indeed, be terrible. A touching thing about the one who could offer only such poor accommodation to a friend, was his pointing to a little mound in the few feet of enclosure before his door, and saying that his only son, an infant, was buried there. The way in which graves are scattered up and down Canada is, indeed, one

of the most affecting sights, as one passes. Churchyards are, of course, only found where population has gathered to some extent, and hence, all who die in the first periods of settlement used to be buried on their own farms. Very often, in riding through old parts of the country, a little paling in the side of a field tells the story of some lonely grave. The Moslems, who feel themselves about to die in the desert, pass away with a parting prayer that the Resurrection Angel may not forget their lonely resting-places at the last day. I have often thought that these patriarchs of the woods might have closed their life with the same petition.

One of our visitors told us an amusing story of the notions of equality that everywhere prevailed. He had been visiting an old Canadian township, with his wife and a young lady, their friend, and found, when night came, that there was only one bed unoccupied, which was appropriated to himself and his wife. Their friend was, therefore, led away to another room in which there were two beds — one for the host and his wife, the other for the servant, and to this she was pointed, with the information that if she lay close she could find room at the girl's back. Not altogether relishing this arrangement, she made some excuse for returning to the "parlor," where she sat for a time, only coming to her sleeping-place when she could not help it. But that she should ever have hesitated in the matter, seemed to all, alike, unaccountable, and,

our visitor assured us, had so impressed their minds, that, a good while after, he learned that they still talked of it, and spoke of her pride as marking unusual depravity.

In later years I was happy to make the acquaintance, in one of the Canadian towns, of Captain L——, who had commanded one of the expeditions in search of Sir John Franklin, and, in many conversations with him, learned particulars of winter life in the more northern part of the American continent, which, in comparison, make that of Canada even inviting. To think of undressing, for eight months of the year, in these fearful regions, is out of the question. The dress, frozen stiff through the day, is thawed into soaking wetness by the heat of a snow-house at night, in which each sits as close to his neighbor as is possible, with no light but that of a miserable lamp, and imprisoned on every side by the heaped-up blocks of snow. In Canada, we can always get ourselves dried, whatever the weather; but there, all alike, when not on board ship, are wet, month after month, each night through the winter. Happening one day to hear a boy whistling the negro song, "Old Uncle Ned," the captain stopped me with the question, "Where do you think I first heard that song?" Of course I told him I could not tell. "It was on a terrible night, in Prince Regent's Inlet, when we were crossing it. The snow was falling very heavily, and the storm roaring through the hummocks, and I had called a

halt behind a great piece of ice which offered a shelter. I thought we had better build a snow-house behind it and take refuge for the night. The men squatted down in this, I in their midst, all of us huddled together as close as possible, and, to keep up their spirits through the dismal hours, they began singing one thing after another, and that among the rest." This was worse than the encampments of surveyors, bad though they be.

There was not a great deal of sport to be had, if we exclude the deer, in our neighborhood. When we went out with our guns, the snow was generally marked by a good many squirrel tracks, and the woodpeckers were still to be seen, but game, properly so called, was not abundant. There was some however, and we managed to get our proportion now and then for our table. One day, in passing a tree, I heard a sound something like that of a grouse rising, and, on turning, to my astonishment, found it came from a bird like our partridges, which had lighted on a bough close at hand. A moment, and it was in a fair way for contributing to our dinner. These birds are in Canada called partridges, but their proper name is the ruffed grouse. When sprung, it flies with great vigor and with a loud whirring noise, sweeping to a considerable distance through the woods before it alights. The cock has a singular power of making a drumming noise with his wings, which, when heard in the silence of the woods, has a strange effect. Standing on an old fallen log

and inflating its whole body as a turkey-cock does, strutting and wheeling about with great stateliness, he presently begins to strike with his stiffened wings in short and quick strokes, which became more and more rapid until they run into each other, making the sound to which I allude. It is no doubt the way in which he pays his addresses to his mate, or calls her from a distance. They always perch in trees, delighting in the thick shade of the spruce or the pine, and are perfect models of stupidity, letting you get every advantage in your efforts to shoot them. I have known one sit, without attempting to stir, while a dog was getting frantic in his appeals at the tree foot that you should come and kill it. If your gun snap you may take your time, and, if necessary, may draw your charge and reload, without your victim moving. He will stand and gape at you during the whole process, even if your dog be barking and tearing a few yards below him. It is even said that you may bag a whole covey of them if you shoot the lowest first and go upwards. I myself have seen my brother, on coming on some of them when without his gun, run home perhaps half a mile for it, and find them still sitting where they were, when he came back, as if waiting to be shot. They are delicious eating, and so tender is their skin, that you must not think of carrying them by the head, which would be sure to come off with the weight of the body.

One day, walking down the ice of the river, a

curious appearance presented itself at some distance before me, like a brown heap, or mound, thrown up on the white surface. Making my way toward it, when about a hundred yards off, I thought I saw it move a little, and, halting for a moment, perceived that it really did so. I was half inclined to go home for my gun to make myself safe, when suddenly the head and shoulders of an Indian, raised from the edge of the buffalo skin, for such it was, dissipated any alarm. Going up to him, I found he was employed in fishing, and partly for protection, partly to keep the fish from being alarmed, had completely covered himself with the hide which had so attracted my attention. He had cut a hole through the two-feet-thick ice about a foot square, and sat with a bait hanging from one hand, while in the other he held a short spear to transfix any deluded victim which it might tempt to its destruction. The bait was an artificial fish of white wood, with leaden eyes and tin fins, and about eight or nine inches in length. He seemed rather annoyed at my disturbing him; but on my giving him a small ball of twine I happened to have with me, we became good enough friends, and after a few minutes I left him.

There was a marriage on the river the first winter we were there, which, in some respects, amused us. The bride was an elegant girl, of genteel manners; and the bridegroom was a well-educated and very respectable young man; but that

either of them should have thought of marrying in such a state of poverty as was common to both, was a thing to be thought of only in Canada. The bridegroom's wealth was, I believe, limited to some twenty pounds, and the bride brought for her portion fifty acres of land and some stock, which a relative gave her as a dowry. But money she had none, and even the shoes in which she went to be married, as I afterwards learned, had been borrowed from a married sister. Their future home was simply a dilapidated log-house, which stood with its gable to the roadside, perhaps eight feet by eighteen, forming two apartments, an addition, which had once been intended to be made, so as to join the end next the road at right angles, but remained unfinished, being shut off by a door of thin deal, which, alone, kept the wind out at that corner. We crossed the ice to the American side to have the ceremony performed, after which there was a grand dinner, with true Canadian abundance, in her patron's house, in which, up to that time, she had had her home. Their own shanty not being as yet habitable, the young couple remained there till it was repaired, so as to let them move to it. But no money could be spent on the mansion; whatever was to be done had to be done by the kind aid of amateurs, if any Canadians deserve that name, whatever they may have to undertake. The chimney had to be rebuilt of mud, the walls caulked and filled up with mud, some panes of glass

put in the two little windows, a wooden latch to be fitted to the thin deal that formed the outer door, and the whole had to be whitewashed, after which all was pronounced ready. The furniture was as primitive as the house. A few dishes on a rude shelf, a pot or two, a few wooden chairs and a table, set off the one end; while, in the other, an apology for a carpet, and a few better things — the faint traces of richer days in their father's houses — made up their parlor; a wooden bench on the one side, ingeniously disguised as a sofa, reminding you of the couplet in Goldsmith's description of the village ale-house, where was seen

> "The chest, contrived a double debt to pay —
> A bed by night, a chest of drawers by day."

The produce of the fifty acres, which were mostly cleared, but which, having been the farm of an old French settler, were wellnigh worn out for a time, and had wretched fences, was to be the support of the young housekeepers, though, less than a year before, the husband had been a student in one of the universities in Scotland. To have seen him when fairly installed in his agricultural honors, in a wretched straw hat, blue shirt, cotton trowsers, and heavy coarse boots, with a long blue beech rod in his hand, shouting to his oxen, it would hardly have occurred to an old countryman that he was any thing but a laborer. I am thankful to say, how-

ever, that he ultimately escaped from the misery in which his imprudent marriage threatened to involve him, by getting into a pretty good mercantile situation, in which, I hope, he is now comfortably settled. I should have said, that, having no money with which to hire labor, all the work on his farm had to be done by his own hands, without any aid. The trifle he had at first, melted like snow, the two having set out with it to make a wedding-trip, in a sleigh to a town seventy miles off, from which they returned with little but the empty purse.

A little before Christmas a great time came on — the high solemnity of the annual pig-killing for the winter. It was bad enough for the poor swine, no doubt, but the human details were, in some respects, sufficiently ludicrous. The first year we got a man to do the killing, and a woman to manage the rest; and, between them, with a razor-blade fixed into a piece of wood for a scraper, they won our admiration by their skill. I mention it only for an illustration it afforded of the misery to which the poor Indians are often reduced in the winter. A band of them made their appearance almost as soon as we had begun, and hung round, for the sake of the entrails and other offal, till all was over. Of course we gave them good pieces, but they were hungry enough to have needed the whole, could we have spared it. As soon as any thing was thrown aside, there was a scramble of both men and women for it. Each, as soon as he had secured his share,

twisted it round any piece of stick that lay near, and, after thrusting it for a minute into the fire, where the water was heating for scalding the pigs, devoured it greedily, filthy and loathsome as it was. They must often be in great want in the cold weather, when game is scarce. I was coming from the bush one morning, when I saw an Indian tugging with all his might at something that lay in the middle of the road. On nearer approach, it proved to be one of our pigs, which had died of some disease during the night. The poor fellow had put his foot on its side, and was pulling with all his strength at the hind-leg to try to tear off the ham, but a pig's skin is very tough, and though he pulled at it till he had crossed and recrossed the road several times, he had to give up the battle at last, and leave it as he found it. A friend of mine who was lost in the woods for several days, and, in the end, owed his deliverance to his falling in with a few wigwams, told me that the Indians informed him that they were sometimes for three days together without food.

CHAPTER X.

Our neighbors. — Insect plagues. — Military officers' families in the bush. — An awkward mistake. — Dr. D—— nearly shot for a bear. — Major M——. — Our candles. — Fortunate escape from a fatal accident.

WE used to have delightful evenings sometimes, when neighboring settlers came to our house, or when we went to their houses. Scanty though the population was, we had lighted on a section of the country which had attracted a number of educated and intelligent men, who, with their families, made capital society. Down the river we had Captain G ——, but he was little respected by reason of his irregular habits, which, however, might be partly accounted for by the effect on his brain of a fierce slash on the head which he had got at the storming of Ciudad Rodrigo. Then, above us, we had, about three miles off, Mr. R ——, an English gentleman-farmer, who had found his way to the backwoods, after losing much money from one cause or another. He was one of the churchwardens, and leader of the choir in the Episcopal chapel, as it was called, for there is no church establishment in Canada; a man, moreover, of much general information, a good shot, and, what was

better, a good Christian. He had always plenty of fresh London newspapers of the stiff Tory class, but acceptable to all alike in such a place as St. Clair. His house was at the foot of a steep bank, and as there were only himself and Mrs. R—— to occupy it, its size was not so striking as its neatness. A broad verandah ran along the side of it next the river, its green color contrasting very pleasantly with the whiteness of the logs of the house. There were three apartments within; one a sitting-room, the other two bedrooms, one of which was always at the disposal of a visitor. Over the mantelpiece hung a gun and a rifle, and on it stood, as its special ornament, a silver cup given by one of the English Cabinet Ministers as the prize in a shooting-match in B——shire, and won by Mr. R——. There was only one drawback to a visit to him, at least in summer, and that was the certainty of your getting more than you bargained for in the insect way when you went into the barn to put up your horse. Fleas are wonderfully plentiful throughout Canada, but some parts are worse than others. A sandy soil seemed to breed them, as the mud of the Nile was once thought to breed worms, and Mr. R——'s barn stood on a spot which the fleas themselves might have selected as a favorable site for a colony. Under the shelter of his sheds they multiplied to a wonderful extent. So incurable was the evil that it had come to be thought only a source of merriment.

"Ah, you've been at the barn, have you? ha, ha!" was all the pity you could get for any remark on the plentifulness of insect life in these quarters. "It isn't half so bad," he added one day, "as the preacher over the river, who sat down at the door-step of the chapel to look over his notes before service, and had hardly got into the pulpit before he found that a whole swarm of ants had got up his trousers. You may think how his hands went below the bookboard on each side of him, but it wouldn't do. He had to tell the congregation that he felt suddenly indisposed, and would be back in a few moments, which he took advantage of to turn the infested garment inside out behind the chapel, and after having freed them of his tormentors, went up to his post again, and got through in peace."

"I don't think he was much worse off," struck in a friend, "than the ladies are with the grasshoppers. The horrid creatures, with their great hooky legs, and their jumping six feet at a time, make dreadful work when they take a notion of springing, just as folks are passing over them. I've seen them myself, through a thin muslin dress, making their way hither and thither in service-time, and there they must stay till all is over."

But I am forgetting the list of our river friends. There were, besides Mr. B——, four or five miles above us, Captain W——, who had been flag-lieutenant of a frigate off St. Helena, while Bonaparte was a captive there, and had managed to preserve

a lock of his soft, light brown hair; and Mr. L——, brother of one of our most eminent English judges, and himself once a midshipman under Captain Marryatt; and Post-Captain V—— and the clergyman — the furthest only ten miles off. There were, of course, plenty of others, but they were of a very different class — French Canadians, agricultural laborers turned farmers, and the like, with very little to attract in their society.

The number of genteel families who had betaken themselves to Canada, was, in those days, astonishing. The fact of the Governors being then mostly military men, who offered inducements to their old companions in arms who had not risen so high in rank as they, led to crowds of that class burying themselves in the woods all over the province. I dare say they did well enough in a few instances, but in very many cases the experiment only brought misery upon themselves and their families. Brought up in ease, and unaccustomed to work with their hands, it was not to be expected that they could readily turn mere laborers, which, to be a farmer in Canada, is absolutely necessary. I was once benighted about forty miles from home, and found shelter for the night in a log-house on the roadside, where I shared a bed on the floor with two laborers, the man of the house and his wife sleeping at the other end of the room. After breakfast the next morning, in grand style, with cakes, "apple sauce" in platefuls, bread white as snow, meat, butter,

cream, cheese, fritters, and colorless green tea of the very worse description, I asked them if they could get any conveyance to take me home, as the roads were very heavy for travelling on foot, from the depth of the snow, and its slipperiness in the beaten track. They themselves, however, had none, but I was directed to Captain L——'s, close at hand, where I was told I might find one. The house stood on a rising ground which was perfectly bare, all the trees having been cut down for many acres round. There was not even the pretence of garden before the doors, nor any enclosure, but the great shapeless old log-house stood, in all its naked roughness, alone. Mrs. L——, I found, was an elderly lady of elegant manners, and had seen a great deal of the world, having been abroad with her husband's regiment in the Mediterranean and elsewhere. She had met Sir Walter Scott at Malta, and was full of gossip about him and society generally in England and elsewhere. Her dress struck me on entering. It had once been a superb satin, but that was very many years before. There was hardly any thing to be called furniture in the house, a few old wooden chairs, supplemented by some blocks of wood, mere cuts of trees, serving for seats, a great deal table, and a "grand piano!" which, Mrs. L—— told me, they bought at Vienna, forming all that could be seen. The very dog-irons on which their fire rested were broken. Overhead, I heard feet pattering on the loose open boards which

formed the floor of some apartments, and was presently informed that "the dressing-room" of the Misses L—— was above, and that they would soon be down. Not an inch of carpet, nor any ornament on the walls, nor any thing, in fact, to take off the forlorn look of emptiness, was in the place; but the stateliness of language and manner on the part of the hostess was the same as if it had been a palace. After a time, a lad, the youngest of the household, made his appearance, and was informed of my wish to get on to Bidport as quickly as possible. He was introduced as having been born in Corfu, and as speaking Greek as fluently as English; but the poor fellow had a bad chance of ever making much use of his linguistic acquirements in such a place. The horse having to be caught, and a jumper to be "fixed," I had a long rest before setting out, and, in the mean time, the sound of the axe, and of wooden pins being driven home, intimated that the vehicle was being manufactured. Captain L——, it appeared, had come there in the idea that the country would soon be filled up, and that, in some magical way, the soil, covered though it was with trees, would yield him a living at once plentiful and easily procured. But years had passed on, the money got for his commission was spent, and the township round him was still almost a wilderness. From one step to another the family sank into the deepest want, until Mrs. L—— was at last forced to try to get food, by making up the

wreck of her former finery into caps and such like for the wives of the boors around, and hawking them about, till she could sell them for flour or potatoes. It could not have been expected that the captain could work like a laborer — he was totally unfit for it, and would have died over his task, or, at best, could have made no living; and, except the stripling who was to drive me, the family consisted only of daughters. One of these, however, shortly after my visit, actually managed to make an excellent marriage, even in that horrible place; but there was a dash of the ludicrous even in the courtship, from the pinching and straits to which their poverty subjected them. The suitor had not as yet declared himself, and the fact of his being a gentleman by birth and education, made his frequent visits only so much the more embarrassing. One day he had come in the forenoon, and stayed so long, that it was clear he had no intention of leaving before dinner, while there was literally nothing in the house but a few potatoes, which they could not of course offer him. What was to be done? Mrs. L—— and the fair one, her eldest daughter, retired to a corner of the room to consult, and, lest any thing should be overheard, they spoke in Italian, which they never dreamed of the suitor understanding. To his unspeakable amusement, the whole perplexity of the case forthwith proceeded to unfold itself in foreign syllables. "The nasty fellow, what in the world wont he go away for?" says the daughter;

"look at him there, sitting like a fool when people are in such trouble. He ought to know that we have nothing in the pantry but a few horrid potatoes." And so forth. This was quite enough for the visitor. He suddenly recollected that he had another call to make, and their difficulty about him was over in a minute. But the marriage came off notwithstanding, and a handsome couple they made.

After a time the sleigh was ready, such as it was — a rough box, on rough runners, close to the ground, with a piece of plank for a seat, and a bed-quilt for a wrapper; and late that night I got home, a half-sovereign and his expenses making the poor young fellow right glad I had chanced to come his way.

One day I was much diverted by an incident narrated to me by Mr. B——. "You know," said he, "Dr. D——, from Toronto, was riding along in a sleigh yesterday on some business or other. You are aware he is very short and stout, and he had on a buffalo coat, and a great fur cap. Well, down goes his horse, its feet balled with the snow, I suppose; and there it lay, helpless, on its side, under the shafts. It was pretty near old John Thompson's, the Scotchman. Out gets the doctor to help his poor horse by unbuckling its straps, and so on, and, being very short-sighted, he had to get down his face almost on it. Just at this time, Mrs. Thompson chanced to come to the

door, and there was this apparition, in the distance, in the middle of the road. She instantly made up her mind what it was. 'Eh, John, John, bring your gun; here's a bear devoorin' a horse!' But they didn't shoot the doctor after all, for the old man found out in time who it was."

But I have to say a little more about some of the marriages in our neighborhood, or not far from it. You may easily suppose that it is not every one who is so lucky as Miss L——, of whom I have spoken. Those of both sexes who made poor matches were much more numerous in those early days. There was Kate S——, the daughter of a captain in the army, an elegant girl, who, for want, I suppose, of any other suitor, married a great coarse clown, whom her father, had he been living then, would hardly have taken to work for them. When he died, she married another, his fellow, and ended, on his dying, by taking, as her third husband, a working tailor, with three or four children. There was Major M——, who had come to the country about the same time as Captain L——; nothing could be more wretched than the appearance of his house on the road-side, with the great trees almost close to it, himself an elderly man, and his only children two daughters. I remember passing on horseback one frightful morning, when the roads were at the worst, and finding him on the top of a prostrate log, trying to cut off enough for his fire. His daughter finally married a small tradesman in

a neighboring town; and the major thankfully went to close his days with his son-in-law, in far greater comfort than he had known for a long time. Young fellows married girls whom their mothers would hardly have taken for servants in England; partly, I suppose, because there were not in some parts many to choose from, and partly, no doubt, because their position as farm-laborers, which they had really come to be, had lowered their tastes. I remember seeing a young man come out of a village tavern with a short black pipe in his mouth, a long beech rod in his hand, and a blue blouse, surmounted by a wretched straw hat, for his dress, his whole appearance no better than that of any laborer round. He was driving an ox-wagon, but, before starting, a lady at my side in the stage, which had stopped at the tavern, accosted him, and they entered freely into conversation together. He turned out to be a son of Colonel ——, who lived in a wretched log-hut not far distant. He told his friend that he hoped to get a good birth that summer as purser on one of the small lake steamers; and I hope he succeeded. Meanwhile, he was mixing with the herd of "bush-whackers," as Canadians say, at the tavern fire, himself almost one of them.

We had one drawback in the long winter nights —there was often a great scarcity of candles. One was lighted at supper, but it was put out immediately after the meal; and we had to sit at the light of the fire, which we made as bright as possible

by a supply of resinous pine, from time to time. We, sometimes, had enough of candles, indeed, but I think we were more often without them. Some lard in a saucer, with a piece of rag for a wick, was one of our plans in addition to the pine, when we wished to see our way to our beds.

There was very nearly a fatal accident down the river one day, occasioned by a sleigh, and the folks in it, with the horses as well, breaking through an air-hole in the ice, that is, a spot at which the air imprisoned below the ice had found its escape, leaving the surface only very slightly frozen. How they got out I hardly know, but the ice round the hole was quite strong; and after one of the party had clambered upon it, he managed to fish out the rest, who had clung to the sleigh. Even the horses were saved; but the method taken with them seemed to me as hazardous as it was strange: ropes were passed round their necks as quickly as possible, and when by this means they were half choked, they floated so high that they were got out with comparative ease.

CHAPTER XI.

"Now Spring returns." — Sugar-making. — Bush psalmody. — Bush preaching. — Worship under difficulties. — A clerical Mrs. Partington. — Biology. — A ghost. — "It slips good." — Squatters.

BY the middle of March the sun had begun, in the very open places, to show some power, especially in the little spots sheltered from the cold by the woods, where his beams found an entrance to the soil. Here and there, traces of the bare earth began to reappear, and the green points of the succulent plants were preparing to burst out into their first leaves; the buds, too, on some of the trees, were distinctly visible, but there was a long time still before us, between these first promises of spring and their actual realization. The last snow-fall came in the middle of April, and, between that time and the first of May, the weather could hardly be said to be settled into spring. But already, towards the third week of March, the birds had made up their minds to come back to us, in expectation of the opening leaf. Flocks of blue jays, in their beautiful plumage, blue set off with white and black, flitted from the top of one of the lower trees

to another, chattering incessantly. Everything had been desolate around us for long, and now to see such signs of returning warmth and verdure was unspeakably delightful.

With the first opening of spring, and while yet the snow lay thick in the fields and the woods, the season of maple sugar-making commenced. It seemed extraordinary to me for a long time that sugar should be got in quantities from a great forest tree, the modest sugar-cane having been always in my mind the only source of it — except, indeed, the sugar-beet, by the growth of which Napoleon tried to make France furnish her own sugar, instead of having to buy English colonial sugar from any of the European ports. But a great quantity is made, in Canada and the United States, from the maple, both for sale and home use, a vast amount being eaten by the native-born Canadians as a sweetmeat, just as we eat candy; and very little else is known in many parts of the backwoods for household purposes. The bests days for sugar-making are the bright ones, after frosty nights, the sap running then most freely. The first thing we had to do with our "bush," which is the name given to the maples preserved for sugar-making, was to see that each tree was provided with a trough, which we made out of pine, or some other soft wood, by cutting a log into lengths of perhaps two feet, then splitting each in two, and hollowing the flat side so that it would hold about a bucketful of sap. We

next took narrow pieces of wood, about a foot long, and made spouts of them with a gouge, after which we made a cut in each tree, with the axe, three or four inches long and an inch deep, in a slanting direction, adding another straight cut at the lower end of it with the gouge, that there might be no leaking, and sinking a hole for a spout, where they met; the gouge that cut the spouts making the hole into which they were thrust. Below these spouts the troughs were set to collect the sap, which was carried as often, as they were nearly full, to another, of enormous dimensions, close to the fire. These colossal troughs are simply huge trunks of trees hollowed out for the purpose; ours would have held fifty barrels. The emptying into this was made every morning and evening until a large quantity had been gathered, and then the boiling began in large "kettles," as they are called, made for the purpose, and suspended over the blazing fire from a stout pole, resting on two forked branches thrust into the earth at each side. The sap once in the kettles has a hard time of it: the fires are kept up in royal brightness for days together, not being allowed to die out even during the night.

It was a very pleasant time with us, though it was hard work, and what with the white snow, the great solemn trees, the wild figures dancing hither and thither, and our loud merriment, it was very striking when the evenings had set in. One of the kettles was chosen for "sugaring off," and had es-

pecially assiduous watching. Not a moment's rest could its unfortunate contents get from the incessant boiling we kept up; fresh sap being added as often as it seemed to be getting too dry. In its rage, the sap would every now and then make desperate efforts to boil over; but we were on the watch for this also, and as soon as it manifested any intention of the kind, we rubbed round the inside of the kettle with a piece of pork-fat, beyond the limits of which it would no more pass than if it had been inside some magic circle. My sisters were as busy as we at every part of the process, and their poor dresses showed abundant and lasting memorials of their labors, in the rents made in them by the bushes. What we were all like, from head to foot, after a time, may be more easily conceived than described. Our smudged faces, and sugary, sloppy clothes, made us all laugh at one another.

As the sap grew thicker with the incessant boiling, another element was added to our amusement, in the stickiness of every thing we handled. If we leaned against a log at hand we were fast bound; and the pots, pans, ladles, buckets, axe-handles, troughs — every thing we touched, indeed, seemed to part from us only with regret. We were fortunate in having no young children amongst us, as they would, of course, have been in the thick of the fray, and have become half-crystallized before all was over. The "clearing off" was managed by pouring in beaten eggs when the sap was beginning to get thick. This

served to bring all the impurities at once to the top, so that we could readily skim them off. Several in genious ways had been told us of knowing when the process was complete. One was by boring small holes in a flat piece of wood, and blowing on it after dipping it into the syrup; the sugar going through the holes in long bubbles, if it were boiled enough. Another plan was to put a little on the snow, when, if it got stiff, it was time to pour all out. Every thing that would hold it was then, forthwith, put into requisition, after having been well greased to keep the sugar from sticking, and, presently, we had cakes, loaves, lumps, blocks, every shape, in fact, of rich brown-colored sugar of our own making. Some, which we wanted to crystallize, was put into a barrel, and stirred while cooling, which effectually answered the purpose. Small holes bored in the bottom made the sugar thus obtained whiter than the rest, by allowing the molasses mingled with it to drain off. We kept some sap for vinegar, which we made by simply boiling three or four pailfuls until reduced to one, and corking this up in a keg for a time.

For the first and second years the poorer settlers have a dreadful job of it in the sugar bush, from not having had sufficient time to fence it in from the cattle, which, from their intrusion, are a constant annoyance. They poke their great noses into every thing, and one taste of the sap is very much to them what they say the taste of blood is to a tiger, in

stimulating their thirst for more. In they come, braving all risks for a sip of their much-loved nectar; out go the spouts from the trees, over go the buckets of sap, and, worse than all, if the brutes succeed in drinking any quantity, they are very often seriously, if not mortally injured, their indulgence acting on them very much as clover does, blowing out their stomachs, and even bursting them. Another annoyance, at first, is the not having had time to cut out the "under brush," so as to make it possible to take a sleigh, with barrels on it, from tree to tree, to collect the sap, with the help of oxen, and hence, having to carry bucket by bucket to the "kettles," often from a considerable distance, which is no trifling task, over wet snow, and rough ground, thick with every obstruction. We were fortunate in this respect, having been warned in time, so that every thing was as light as such work can be.

The sugaring-off day was rather a festivity with us, as we followed the custom of a good many of our neighbors, and invited some young folks to come to a carnival on the warm sugar, which is very nice, though I should not care to eat as much at a time as some of our visitors did. The quantity of sap which a single tree yields is astonishing. I think some gave not less than fifty gallons, and the loss of it seemed to do them good rather than harm. The older and stronger the trees the better the sap, and the more abundant — a peculiarity which it

would be well for each of us to be able to have said of his own life as it advanced. The Indians must have been acquainted with the property of the maple for ages; stone sugar-making utensils, of their manufacture, comprising stone troughs and long stone spouts, hollowed out and pointed for sticking into the trees, having often been found in some districts. The few who still survive keep up the habits of their ancestors in this, as in other respects, numbers of them offering sugar which they have made, for barter, each spring.

Happening to be back in the bush one Sunday, I stopped to hear the Presbyterian minister preach; he being expected to come there that afternoon. A log school-house was made to serve for a chapel — a dark, wretched affair, into which, gradually, about seventy or eighty people managed to cram themselves. The singing was conducted by an old German, whose notions of music were certainly far behind those of his countrymen generally. The number of grace notes he threw in was astounding; but the people joined as well as they could, using their powerful lungs with so much vigor, and in such bad time and tune, as to be irresistibly ludicrous. As to keeping abreast of each other through a verse or a line, it seemed never to occur to them. A great fellow would roar himself out of breath, with his face up to the ceiling and his mouth open, like a hen drinking, and then stop, make a swallow to recover himself, or, perhaps, spit on the

floor, and begin again where he left off, in total disregard of the fact that the others were half a line ahead. Who can chronicle the number of "repeats" of each line, or portion of one? And as to the articulation of the words, who could have guessed their meaning from the uncouth sounds he heard? The windows were very small; and, when filled with people, the place was too dark for print to be legible, so that, notwithstanding the excessive cold, the minister had to stand outside the door through the whole service. About the middle of the sermon a brief interruption took place, from a freak on the part of the stove, which stood in the middle of the room, and was of the common kind, with the sides held together by a raised edge on the top and bottom. As usual in all Canadian churches and meetings, some one was stuffing this contrivance full of wood while the sermon was going on, when, in a moment, the top got a trifle too much lifted up, and down came stove-pipe, stove, fire and wood, in one grand rumble, to the ground. As the floor chanced to be made only of roughly-smoothed planks, with great gaps between each, and the carpenters' shavings and other inflammable matter were clearly visible below, the danger of the whole structure catching fire was great; but the congregation were equal to the emergency. A number of men were out in a moment, to return, the next, with great armfuls of snow, which they heaped on the burning mound in such profusion that every

spark of fire was extinguished in a few minutes. The bottom of the stove was then prepared again for the reception of the sides, the top was once more fitted on, the stove-pipes put in their place, the rubbish thrust into its proper abode inside, and, by the help of a few whittlings made on the spot, a fresh fire was roaring in a very short time, enabling the minister to conclude in peace and comfort.

I have seen strange incidents in backwoods worship. One church happened to be built on rather high posts, leaving an open space of from two to to three feet below, between the floor and the ground. Into this shady retreat a flock of sheep, headed by the bell-wether, had made its entrance one Sunday morning while we were at worship overhead, and presently tinkle, tinkle, tinkle went the bell, now in single sounds, and then, when the wearer perhaps shook some fly off its ears, in a rapid volley. Nobody stirred. The clergyman alone seemed incommoded; but no one thought he was particularly so, till, all at once, he stopped, came down from the pulpit, went out and drove off the intruders, after which he recommenced as if nothing had occurred. At another place, at the communion, to my astonishment, instead of the ordinary service, a black bottle and two tumblers were brought out, with all due solemnity, as substitutes.

We had a sample of the strength of female intellect, one winter, in an old woman, who visited the next village to preach on the Prophecies, and drew

the whole of the humbler population of the neighborhood to hear her. Grammar, of course, was utterly disregarded; she knew the obscurer books of Scripture by heart, and, having a tongue more than usually voluble, and an assurance that nothing could abash, she did her best to enlighten the crowd on no mean topics. Using her left arm as a chronological measure, she started, with Daniel, at the elbow, and reached the consummation of all things at her finger-ends, which she figuratively called "the jumping-off place." Some of her similes, as reported through the township, amused me exceedingly as samples of what was just suited to please the majority of her hearers. "There's no more grace, sir, in your heart than there's blood in a turnip," was her apostrophe to some imaginary sinner. "Them sinners," she added — "them hardened sinners, needs to be done to, as you do to a old black tobaky pipe — throw 'em into the fire, and burn 'em — then they'll be wite." Such wandering luminaries are, for the most part, importations from the States, where they abound almost beyond belief. Another of these learned expositors visited us for the purpose of giving lectures on "Biology," by which he meant the effects produced on his patients by looking at large wooden buttons which he carried with him; a continued stare at them for a time making the parties become, as he averred, completely subject, even in their thoughts, to his will. He would tell one he was a pig, and all manner of

swinish sounds and actions followed. Another was assured he could not rise from his seat, and forthwith appeared glued to the spot, despite his most violent efforts to get up. Whether there was any actual truth in the exhibition, through the power of some subtle mesmeric laws of which we know little, I cannot say. Some thought there was; others, that the whole was a joke of some young fellows who wished to create fun at the expense of the audiences. But the exhibitor himself was a real curiosity, in his utter illiterateness and matchless assurance. He had seen somebody else exhibiting in this way, and, like a shrewd Yankee, thought he might make a little money by doing the same. I wished to gain some information from him on the subject, if he had any to give, and waited, after the crowd had separated, to ask him about it; but all I could get from him was the frank acknowledgment that "this here profession was not the one he follered; he had jist been a-coming to Canedy after some lumber — he dealt in lumber, he did — and calc'lated that he might as well's no make his expenses by a few licturs." I almost laughed outright at this candid avowal, and left him.

One day, Louis de Blanc, an old Canadian voyager, who had left his arduous avocation and settled near our place long before we came, amused me by a story of an apparition he had seen the night before in passing the graveyard at the little Catholic chapel on the roadside, two miles above

us. It was a little plot of ground, neatly fenced round with wooden pickets, with the wild flowers growing rank and high among the few lonely graves, — some tall black crosses here and there outtopping them. "You know Michel Cauchon died last week; well, he always had a spite at me; and, sure enough, last night about twelve o'clock, as I was passing the churchyard, didn't I see his ghost running across the road in the shape of a rabbit. Ah! how I sweated as I ran home! I never stopped till I got over my fence and safe in bed." The poor rabbit that had caused the panic would, no doubt, have been astonished, could it have learned the terror it had inspired.

It was most astonishing to see what kind of food some of these old Canadians relished — at least, it was so to me. One day, having gone over to Le Blanc's on some errand, I found his son Louis, a boy of twelve or fourteen, with the handle of a frying-pan in one hand and a spoon in the other, drinking down mouthful after mouthful of the melted fat left after frying pork, and, on my silently looking at him, was met by a delighted smile and a smack of his lips, accompanied by a rapturous assurance of, "Ah! it slips good." Fat, however, is only another name for carbon, or, it may be said, charcoal, and carbon is needed in large quantities to maintain an adequate amount of animal heat in the inhabitants of cold climates, and to this must be attributed their craving for grossly fat food. Cap-

tain Cochrane, in his "Pedestrian Tour to Behring's Straits," shows us that poor Louis Le Blanc was in this respect far outdone by the Siberian tribes living near the Arctic Ocean, who relished nothing more than a tallow candle, and would prolong the enjoyment of one by pulling the wick, once and again, through their half-closed teeth, that no particle of the grease might be lost. Indeed, my friend Captain L—— told me, that in the Arctic regions, his men had acquired a similar relish for "moulds" and "dips," and could eat a candle as if it had been sugar-stick. The Esquimaux, as we all know, live on the nauseous blubber of the whale, cutting it off in long strips, which, Sydney Smith facetiously avers, they hold over them by the one hand, and guide down by the other, till full to the mouth, when they cut it off at the lips. The quantity of butcher's meat eaten by every one during winter in Canada is astonishing. Even the bush people, who, when living in England hardly ever saw it, eat it voraciously three times a-day, with a liberal allowance of grease each time. What oceans of mutton-oil I have seen floating round chops, in some of their houses! How often have I declined the offer of three or four tablespoonfuls of pork-oil, as "gravy" or "sauce" to the pork itself! Yet it "slips good," apparently, with the country population generally. The quantity of butter these good folks consume is no less liberal. On the table of a poor log-house they never think of putting down a

lump weighing less than a pound, at which every one hacks as he likes with his own knife. But they need it all, and it is a mercy they have it, to help them to withstand the effects of extreme cold and hard work. The poorer classes in towns, who have no land on which to raise animal food, and little money with which to buy it, must suffer very severely.

There were a few "squatters" along the river here and there — that is, men who had settled on spots of the wilderness without having bought them, or having acquired any legal rights, but were content to use them while undisturbed in possession, and to leave their clearings when owners came forward. They are always, in such cases, allowed the value of their improvements, and as, meanwhile, they live entirely rent free, their position is far from wholly disadvantageous. In the early days of the colony, indeed, there was no other plan. The few first comers could hardly be any thing but squatters, as the country was all alike an uncleared wilderness, and there is no inducement to pay money for any one spot, had they possessed the means. Some of the French families in our neighborhood had been settled on the same farm for generations, and had at last actually bought their homesteads at the nominal price demanded by government; but the squatters were not yet extinct, though they might at one time have had their choice of the richest soil at something like fourpence an acre.

A friend of mine told me, that within a period of about thirty years, he had seen land sold again and again at no higher price. On the same lot as that which boasted the Catholic chapel, one — a lonely survivor of the class — had taken up his abode, many years before our time, building a log-house for himself, on the smallest possible scale, a few yards from the river. How he could live in such a place seemed strange. It was not more than some ten or twelve feet in length, and the upper part of it was used as his barn. Here, all alone, poor Papineau had lived — no one I ever met could tell how long. There was no house or building in sight; no one ever seemed to go near him, nor did he ever visit any neighbor. He was his own cook, housekeeper, washerwomàn, farm-laborer, every thing. I often wish I had tried to find out more about him. We used, when we passed along the river edge, to see him mowing his patch of hay for his cow, or weeding his plot of tobacco, for he grew what he required for his own use of this as of other things; and he was always the same silent, harmless hermit of the woods. It was a strange kind of life to lead. How different from that of a Londoner, or the life of the inhabitant of any large community! Yet he must surely have been contented, otherwise he would have left it and gone where he could have found some society

CHAPTER XII.

Bush magistrates. — Indian forest guides. — Senses quickened by necessity. — Breaking up of the ice. — Depth of the frost. — A grave in winter. — A ball. — A holiday coat.

IN those days our local dignitaries were as primitive as the country itself. On the river, indeed, the magistrates were men of education, but in the bush, the majority possessed no qualifications for acting the part of justices. One of them had the misfortune one winter to have a favorite dog killed by some mischievous person, and feeling excessively indignant at the loss, boldly announced that he was prepared to pay a reward to any party who would give such information respecting the offender as should lead to his conviction. The wording and spelling of this proclamation were alike remarkable. It ran thus: "Whereas sum nutrishus vilain or vilains has killed my dog Seesur, I ereby ofer a reward of five dolars to any one that will mak none the ofender or ofenders." He never got any benefit from his efforts, but the document, in his own handwriting, hung for a long time on the wall of the next tavern, where all could see it, and not a few laughed at its peculiarities.

I was much struck by an instance, which a long journey, about this time, through the woods, gave, of the wonderful faculty possessed by the Indians in going straight from point to point across the thickest forest, where there is apparently nothing to direct their course. Having occasion to return nearly twenty miles from a back township to which the roads had not yet been opened, and not liking to take the circuit necessary if I desired to find others, I thought myself fortunate in meeting with an Indian, who, for a small reward, offered to take me home by the nearest route. When I asked him how he guided himself, he could say very little, but hinted, in his broken English, about one side of the trees being rougher than the other, though I could detect little or no difference on most of them. If it had been in Nova Scotia, I could have understood his reasoning, for there the side of the trees toward the north is generally hung with a long gray beard of moss, from the constant moisture of the climate; but in Canada, it would take very sharp eyes to tell which was the northern and which the other sides from any outward sign. They must have something more to guide them, I think, though what it is I cannot conceive. The senses become wonderfully acute when called into extraordinary service. I have read of prisoners in dark dungeons, who got at last to be able to see the spiders moving about in their webs in the corners of their cells; and blind people often attain such a wonderful delicacy of

touch as to be able to detect things by differences so slight as to be imperceptible by others. The facility with which they read the books prepared for them with raised letters, by simply passing their fingers over the surfaces, is well known. The sailor can discern the appearance of distant land, or the Arab the approach of a camel over the desert, when others would suspect neither. An Indian can smell the fire of a "camp," as they call the place where a party rests for the night, when a European can detect nothing. There may, therefore, be something which can be noticed on the trees, by those who pass their whole lives among them, which others are unable to discover. The Indians derive a great advantage from the skill they possess in tracking the footsteps of men or animals over all sorts of ground, and among dry leaves. This faculty they are enabled to acquire owing to the fact that the forests in North America are generally open enough underneath to offer easy passage; and, moreover, that the soil is little more on the surface than a carpet of rotten wood and decaying leaves, which easily receives the impression of footsteps, and retains it for a length of time. The moss on the fallen trees is another great help in tracking the course of either man or beast through the forest; for neither the one nor the other can well make their way over them without rubbing off portions here and there. Nor is the mere fact of the passage in a particular direction all that an Indian can detect from the traces on the

soil or vegetation. They reason acutely from things which others would overlook, and sometimes surprise one as much by the minute and yet correct conclusions they draw respecting what they have not seen, as the Arab did the Cadi of Bagdad, when he described a camel and its load which had passed, and whose track he had seen ; maintaining that the camel was lame of a foot — because he had noticed a difference in the length of the steps ; that it wanted a tooth, because the herbage it had cropped had a piece left in the middle of each bite ; and, also, that the load consisted of honey on one side and ghee on the other, because he had noticed drops of each on the path as he went along. My Indian made no hesitation at any part of our journey, keeping as straight as possible, and yet he was forced perpetually to wind and turn round trees standing directly in our path, and to vault over fallen logs, which he did with a skill that I in vain tried to imitate.

About the beginning of April the ice in the river was getting very watery, the strength of the sun melting the surface till it lay covered with pools in every direction. Yet people persisted in crossing, long after I should have thought it dangerous in the extreme. It seemed as if it would hold together for a long time yet, but the heat was silently doing its work on it, and bringing the hour of its final disappearance every moment nearer. It had become a wearisome sight when looked at day after day for months, and we all longed for the open river

once more. At last, about the sixteenth of the month, on rising in the morning, to our delight, the whole surface of the ice was seen to be broken to pieces. A strong wind which had been blowing through the night had caused such a motion in the water as to split into fragments the now-weakened sheet that bound it. It was a wonderfully beautiful sight to look at the bright blue water sparkling once more in the light, as if in restless gladness after its long imprisonment, the richness of its color contrasting strikingly with the whiteness of the ice which floated in snowy floes to the south. At first there was only the broken covering of the river, but, very soon, immense quantities of ice came sailing down from the Upper Lakes, jammed together one piece on another, in immense heaps, in every variety of confusion, the upturned edges fringed with prismatic colors. I found that the preparation for this grand upbreaking had been much more complete than I had suspected, from looking at it from a distance; the whole of what had appeared quite solid having been so affected by the sun, that, whichever way you looked at it, long rows of air-bubbles showed themselves through it, showing that there was little power left in it to resist any outward force. The final rupture, though apparently so sudden, had been, in fact, steadily progressing, until, at last, the night's storm had been sufficient to sweep away in an hour what had previously stood the wildest rage of winter. I have

often, since, thought that it gave a very good illustration of the gradually increasing influence of all efforts for good, and of their certain ultimate triumph — each day's faithful work doing so much toward it, though the progress may for long be imperceptible, until at last, when we hardly expect it, the opposing forces give way, as it were, at once, and forthwith leave only a scattered and retreating wreck behind. Gradual preparation, and apparently sudden results, are the law in all things. The Reformation, though accomplished as if at a blow, had been silently made possible through long previous generations ; and when the idolaters in Tahiti threw away their hideous gods, the salutary change was only effected by the long-continued labors of faithful missionaries for many years before — labors, which, to many, must, at the time, have seemed fruitless and vain.

The depth to which the frost had penetrated the ground was amazing. I had already seen proof of its being pretty deep, on the occasion of a grave having to be dug in a little spot of ground attached to a chapel at some distance from us, for the burial of a poor neighbor's wife who had died. The ground was deeply covered with snow, which had to be cleared away before they could begin to dig the grave, and the soil was then found to be so hard that it had to be broken up with pickaxes. Even in that earlier part of the winter the frost was nearly two feet deep, and it was a touching thing to see

the frozen lumps of earth which had to be thrown down on the coffin. Any thing like beating the grave smooth, or shaping it into the humble mound which is so familiar to us at home, as the token of a form like our own lying beneath, was impossible; there could only be a rough approach to it till spring should come to loosen the iron-bound earth. Strangely enough, there were two funerals from the same household within the same month, and the two graves were made side by side. The mother had died just as she was about to start for the house of her daughter-in-law who was ailing, a hundred and twenty miles off, and the object of her beautiful tenderness had herself died before the same month had expired, leaving it as her last wish that she should be laid beside her friend who had departed so lately. It was now the depth of winter — the Arctic cold made every thing like rock — the sleighing was at its best, and thus the journey was made comparatively easy. Laying the coffin in a long sleigh and covering it with straw, and taking a woman with him to carry a young infant to his friends to nurse, the husband set out with his ghastly load. There was no fear of delaying the burial too long, for the corpse was frozen stiff, and might have been kept above ground for weeks without the risk of its thawing. When I used to pass afterwards in summer time, the two graves, which were the first in the burial-ground, wore a more cheerful aspect than they had done at first; the long beauti-

ful grass waving softly over them, and wild flowers borne thither by the winds or by birds, mingling their rich colors with the shades of green around.

I think the soil must eventually have been frozen at least a yard down, if we may judge by its effects. Great gate-posts were heaved up by the expansion of the earth, when the thaw turned the ice into water; for, though ice is lighter than water, it forms a solid mass, whereas the swelling moisture pushes the particles of earth apart. I have seen houses and walls cracked from top to bottom, and fences thrown down, from the same cause; indeed, it is one of the regularly recurring troubles of a Canadian farmer's year. If any thing is to stand permanently, the foundations must be sunk below the reach of the frost. It is very much better, however, in Canada than in the icy wilderness to the north of it. Round Hudson's Bay the soil never thaws completely, so that if you thrust a pole into the earth in the warm season, you may feel the frozen ground a few feet beneath. It is wonderful that any vegetation can grow under such circumstances, but the heat of the sun is so great, that even over the everlasting ice-bed, some crops can be raised in the short fiery summer. Indeed, even on the edge of the great Arctic Ocean, along the coasts of Siberia, and on some spots of the American shore, the earth brought down by rivers and strewn by their floods over the hills of ice, is bright with vegetation for a short part of each year — in this respect not unlike stony and

cold natures which have yet, over their unmelting hardness, an efflorescence of good — the skin of virtue spread, as old Thomas Fuller says, like a mask over the face of vice.

During the winter a great ball was given across the river, in a large barn, which had been cleared for the purpose, the price of the tickets being fixed at a dollar, which included an abundant supper. It was intimated, however, that those who had no money might pay in "dicker"— a Yankee word for barter; a bundle of shingles, a certain number of eggs, or so much weight of butter, being held equivalent to the money, and securing a ticket. I was not present myself, never having much approved of these mixed parties, but the young folks round were in a state of great excitement about it, some of them coming as far as fifteen miles to attend it. They went past in sleigh loads, dashing over the ice on the river as if it had been solid ground. The girls were, of course, in the height of fashion, as they understood it; some of them exposing themselves in ridiculously light clothing for the terrible season of the year, in the belief, no doubt, that it made them look the nicer. Fashions in those days did not travel fast, and what was in its full glory on the river, had been wellnigh forgotten where it took its rise, like the famous Steenkirk stock, of which Addison says, that it took eleven years to travel from London to Newcastle. The taste shown was often very praiseworthy, but sometimes,

it must be admitted, a little out of the way. I have seen girls with checked or figured white muslin dresses, wearing a black petticoat underneath to show off the beauties of the pattern; and I knew of one case where a young woman, who was engrossed in the awful business of buying her wedding dress, could get nothing to please her until she chanced to see, hanging up, a great white window curtain, with birds and flowers all over it, which she instantly pronounced to be the very thing she wanted, and took home in triumph! There was one gentleman's coat on the river which might have formed a curiosity in a museum, as a relic of days gone by. The collar stood up round the ears in such a great roll that the shoulders and head seemed set on each other, and, as to the tails, they crossed each other like a martin's wings, somewhere about the knees. But it was in a good state of preservation, and, for aught I know, may be the holiday pride of its owner to this hour.

It took a week or two for the last fragments of ice to disappear from the river, fresh floes coming down day after day from the lakes beyond, where spring sets in later. As they floated past I often used to think what a mercy it was, that while water gets heavier as it grows cold, until it comes to the freezing-point, it becomes lighter the moment it begins to freeze, and thus rises to the surface, to form ice there, instead of at the bottom. If it continued

as heavy after, as it was immediately before, the rivers and lakes would speedily become solid masses of ice, which could by no possibility be melted. The arrangement by which this is avoided, is a remarkable illustration of the Divine wisdom, and a striking proof of the contrivance and design which is in all God's works.

CHAPTER XIII.

Wild leeks. — Spring birds. — Wilson's poem on the blue bird. — Downy woodpeckers. — Passenger pigeons. — Their numbers. — Roosting places. — The frogs. — Bull frogs. — Tree frogs. — Flying squirrels.

BY the first of May the fields were beginning to put on their spring beauty. But in Canada, where vegetation, once fairly started, makes a wonderfully rapid progress, it is not like that of England, where spring comes down, as the poet tells us —

"Veiled in a shower of shadowing roses,"

and a long interval occurs between the first indications of returning warmth, and the fuller proof of it in the rejoicing green of the woods and earth. The wild leeks in the bush seemed to awaken from their winter's sleep earlier than most other things, as we found to our cost, by the cows eating them and spoiling their milk and butter, by the strong disagreeable taste. In fact, both were abominable for weeks together, until other attractions in vaccine diet had superseded those of the leeks. It was delightful to look at the runnels of crystal water

wimpling down the furrows as the sun grew strong the tender grass beneath, and at each side, showing through the quivering flow like a frame of emerald. The great buds of the chestnuts and those of other trees grew daily larger, and shone in the thick waterproof-coatings with which they had been protected through the winter. Small green snakes, too, began to glide about after their long torpidity; the wild fowl reappeared in long flights high overhead, on their way to their breeding-places in the far north; the reed-sparrows in their rich black plumage, with scarlet shoulders fading off to yellow; the robin, resembling his English namesake only in the name, as he belongs to the family of thrushes in Canada; the squirrels in their beautiful coats, with their great bushy tails and large eyes, stirring in every direction through the trees, and every little while proclaiming their presence by a sound which I can only compare to the whirr of a broken watch-spring; the frogs beginning to send up their thousand croaks from every standing pool — all things, indeed, in the animal and vegetable world showing signs of joy, heralded the flowery summer that was advancing toward us.

The darling little blue-bird, the herald of spring, had already come to gladden us while the snow was yet on the ground, flitting about the barn and the fence-posts, and, after we had an orchard, about the apple-trees, of which it chiefly consisted. About the middle of March he and his mate might be seen

visiting the box in the garden, where he had kept house the year before, or, in places where the orchards were old, looking at the hole in the apple-tree where his family had lived in preceding summers. He had come to be ready for the first appearance of the insects on which chiefly he feeds, and, by killing whole myriads of which, he proves himself one of the best friends of the farmer. There is a poem of Alexander Wilson, the American ornithologist, about the blue-bird, which tells the whole story of a Canada spring so admirably, and is so little known, that I cannot resist the pleasure of quoting part of it.

"When winter's cold tempests and snows are no more,
Green meadows and brown furrowed fields reappearing,
The fishermen hauling their shad to the shore,
And cloud-cleaving geese to the lakes are a-steering;
When first the lone butterfly flits on the wing,
When glow the red maples, so fresh and so pleasing,
Oh, then comes the blue-bird, the herald of spring,
And hails with his warblings the charms of the season.

"Then loud-piping frogs make the marshes to ring,
Then warm glows the sunshine and fine is the weather;
The blue woodland flowers just beginning to spring,
And spice wood and sassafras budding together.
O then to your gardens, ye housewives repair,
Your walks border up, sow and plant at your leisure,
The blue-bird will chant from his box such an air,
That all your hard toils will seem truly a pleasure.

"He flits through the orchard, he visits each tree,
The red-flowering peach, and the apple's sweet blossoms

He snaps up destroyers wherever they be,
And seizes the caitiffs that lurk in their bosoms;
He drags the vile grub from the corn he devours,
The worms from their beds, where they riot and welter;
His song and his services freely are ours,
And all that he asks is, in summer, a shelter.

"The ploughman is pleased when he gleans in his train,
Now searching the furrows, now mounting to cheer him;
The gardener delights in his sweet, simple strain,
And leans on his spade to survey and to hear him;
The slow ling'ring schoolboys forget they'll be chid,
While gazing intent as he warbles before 'em
In mantle of sky-blue, and bosom so red,
That each little wanderer seems to adore him."

The mention of the blue-bird's activity in destroying insects brings to my mind my old friends, the woodpeckers, once more. In John Courtenay's orchard, which was an old one, several of these birds built every season, hovering about the place the whole year, as they are among the very few Canadian birds that do not migrate. He showed me, one day, the nest of one of the species called "Downy," in an old apple-tree. A hole had been cut in the body of the tree, as round as if it had been marked out by a carpenter's compasses, about six or eight inches deep in a slanting direction, and then ten or twelve more perpendicularly, the top of it only large enough to let the parents in and out, but the bottom apparently quite roomy, for the young family. As far as I could see, it was as smooth as a man could have made it, and I was as-

sured that it was the same in every part. It ap pears that these birds are as cunning as they are clever at this art, the two old ones regularly carry ing out all the chips as they are made, and strewing them about at a considerable distance from the nest, so as to prevent suspicion of its presence. Six pure white eggs, laid on the smooth bottom of their curious abode, mark the number of each year's family, the female bird sitting closely on them while they are being hatched, her husband, meanwhile, busying himself in supplying her with choice grubs, that she may want for nothing in her voluntary imprisonment. The little woodpeckers make their first appearance about the middle of June, when one may see them climbing the bark of the tree as well as they can, as if practising before they finally set out in life for themselves. I had often wondered at the appearance of the bark in many of the apple and pear-trees, which seemed as if some one had fired charges of shot into them ; but it was long before I knew the real cause. It appears that it is the work of the woodpeckers, and many farmers consequently think the poor birds highly injurious to their orchards. But there are no real grounds for such an opinion, for no mischief is done by these punctures, numerous though they be. I have always remarked that the trees which were perforated most seemed most thriving, no doubt because the birds had destroyed the insects which otherwise would have injured them. The autumn and winter is the great

time for their operations, and it is precisely the time when the preservation of the fruit, in the coming summer, can be best secured. Curious as it may seem that such a riddling of the bark can be beneficial to the tree, it evidently is so. From the ground to where the branches fork off, there is often hardly an inch of the bark which does not bear the mark of some grub-hunt, and sometimes eight or ten of them might be covered by a penny. Farmers, however, rarely philosophize, and no wonder that in this case they regard as prejudicial what is really a benefit. But, on the other hand, they are correct enough as to the habits of some of the woodpeckers, for greater thieves than the red-headed ones, at some seasons, can hardly be found. The little rascals devour fruit of all kinds as it ripens, completely stripping the trees, if permitted. In fact, they have a liking for all good things; they are sure to pick the finest strawberries from your beds, and have no less relish for apples, peaches, cherries, plums, and pears; Indian corn, also, is a favorite dish with them, while it is still milky. Nor do these little plagues keep to vegetable diet exclusively; the eggs in the nests of small birds are never passed by in their search for delicacies. One can't wonder, therefore, that, with such plundering propensities, they should lose their lives pretty often.

The flocks of pigeons that come in the early spring are wonderful. They fly together in bodies of many thousands, perching, as close as they can

settle, on the trees when they alight, or covering the ground over large spaces when feeding. The first tidings of their approach is the signal for every available gun to be brought into requisition, at once to procure a supply of fresh food, and to protect the crops on the fields, which the pigeons would utterly destroy if they were allowed. It is singular how little sense, or perhaps fear, such usually timid birds have when collected together in numbers. I have heard of one man who was out shooting them, and had crept close to one flock, when their leaders took a fancy to fly directly over him, almost close to the ground, to his no small terror. Thousands brushed past him so close as to make him alarmed for his eyes; and the stream still kept pouring on after he had discharged his barrels, right and left, into it, until nothing remained but to throw himself on his face till the whole had flown over him. They do not, however, come to any part of Canada with which I am acquainted in such amazing numbers as are said by Wilson and Audubon to visit the western United States. The latter naturalist left his house at Henderson, on the Ohio, in the autumn of 1813, on his way to Louisville, and on passing the Barrens, a few miles beyond Hardensburgh, observed the pigeons flying from north-east to south-west in such numbers, that he thought he would try to calculate how many there really were. Dismounting, and seating himself on a knoll, he began making a dot in his note-book for every flock

that passed, but in a short time had to give up the attempt, as he had already put down a hundred and sixty-three in twenty-one minutes, and they still poured on in countless multitudes. The air was literally filled with pigeons; the light of noon-day was obscured as if by an eclipse, and the continued buzz of wings produced an inclination to drowsiness. When he reached Louisville, a distance of fifty-five miles, the pigeons were still passing in unabated numbers, and continued to do so for three days in succession. He calculated that, if two pigeons were allowed for each square yard, the number in a single flock — and that not a large one, extending one mile in breadth and a hundred and eighty in length — could not be less than one billion, one hundred and fifteen millions, one hundred and thirty-six thousand! The food required for such a countless host passes our power to realize clearly, for, at half a pint a day, which is hardly as much as a pigeon consumes, they would eat, in a single day, eight millions, seven hundred and twelve thousand bushels. To get such supplies from cultivated fields would, of course, be impossible, and it is fortunate that they hardly ever attempt it, their principal support being the vast quantities of beech-mast which the unlimited expanse of unbroken forest supplies.

A curious fact respecting them is that they have fixed roosting-places, from which no disturbance appears able to drive them, and to these they resort

night by night, however far they may have to fly to obtain food on the returning day. One of them, in Kentucky, was repeatedly visited by Audubon, who found that it was about forty miles in length by three in breadth. A fortnight after the pigeons had chosen it for the season, he found that a great number of persons, with horses and wagons, guns and ammunition, had already established themselves on its borders. Herds of hogs had been driven up to fatten on a portion of those which might be killed. Some of the visitors were busy plucking and salting what had been already procured, huge piles of them lying on each side of their seats. Many trees two feet in diameter were broken off at no great distance from the ground by the weight of the multitudes that had lighted on them; and huge branches had given way, as if the forest had been swept by a tornado. As the hour of their arrival approached, every preparation was made to receive them: iron pots, containing sulphur, torches of pine-knots, poles and guns, being got ready for use the moment they came. Shortly after sunset the cry arose that they were come at last. The noise they made, though yet distant, was like that of a hard gale at sea, when it passes through the rigging of a closely-reefed vessel. Thousands were soon knocked down by the polemen; the birds continued to pour in; the fires were lighted; and a magnificent as well as wonderful and almost terrifying sight presented itself. The pigeons, arriving by

thousands, alighted everywhere, one above another, until solid masses as large as hogsheads were formed on the branches all round. Here and there the perches gave way, and falling on the ground with a crash, destroyed hundreds of the birds beneath, forcing down the dense groups with which every spot was loaded. The pigeons were constantly coming, and it was past midnight before he perceived a decrease in their number. Before daylight they had begun again to move off, and by sunrise all were gone. This is Audubon's account. I myself have killed thirteen at a shot, fired at a venture into a flock; and my sister Margaret killed two one day by simply throwing up a stick she had in her hand as they swept past at a point where we had told her to stand, in order to frighten them into the open ground, that we might have a better chance of shooting them. I have seen bagfuls of them that had been killed by no more formidable weapons than poles swung right and left at them as they flew close past. The rate at which they fly is wonderful, and has been computed at about a mile a minute, at which rate they keep on for hours together, darting forward with rapid beats of their wings very much as our ordinary pigeons do.

The frogs were as great a source of amusement to us as the pigeons were of excitement. Wherever there was a spot of water, thence, by night and day, came their chorus, the double bass of the bull-

frogs striking in every now and then amidst the indescribable piping of the multitudes of their smaller brethren. It is very difficult to catch a sight of these bassoon performers, as they spring into the water at the slightest approach of danger ; yet you may now and then come on them basking at the side of a pond or streamlet, their great goggle eyes and black skin making them look very grotesque. They are great thieves in their own proper element, many a duckling vanishing from its mother's side by a sudden snap of some one of these solemn gentlemen below. They are a hungry race, always ready apparently for what they can get, and making short work with small fishes, all kinds of small reptiles, and even, I believe, the lesser kinds of snakes, when they can get them. These fellows are the giants of the frog tribes, and portly gentlemen withal, some of them weighing very nearly a pound. The shrill croak of the other frogs is like nothing else that I ever heard : it is a sort of trill of two or three notes, as if coming through water, and it rises from so many throats at once that it may be said never for a moment to cease. There is a kind of frog which lives on the branches of trees, catching the insects on the leaves — a beautiful little creature, of so nicely shaded a green that it is almost impossible to detect it even when you are close to it. Henry and I were one day at work in the early summer near a young maple, in the back part of the farm, and could hardly keep up conversation

for the hissing trill of a number of them on it, but though the tree was so near us, we could not, by all our looking, discover any of the invisible minstrels. At last the thing became so ludicrous that we determined, if possible, to get a sight of one; and as the lower branches began at about our own height, one of us went to the one side, and the other to the other, to watch. Trill — trill — bubble — bubble — bubble — rose all around us, but no other signs of the warblers. We looked and laughed, laughed and looked again; the sound was within a yard of us, yet nothing could be seen. When almost giving up, however, I chanced to look exactly on the spot where one was making his little throat swell to get out another set of notes, and the rise and fall of its breast at once discovered its presence. Henry was at my side in a moment, and we could both see it plainly enough, of course, when our eyes had once fairly distinguished it from the green around. It continued to sit unmoved on its leaf, and we did not disturb it.

One morning we came upon a beautiful little creature which had been killed by some means, and lay in the yard near the barn. It was evidently a squirrel, but differed from the ordinary species in one curious particular. Instead of having its legs free like those of other squirrels, a long stretch of fur extended from the front to the back legs so as to form something like wings when spread out. It was a flying squirrel, a kind not so common as the

others, and coming out mostly by night. These extraordinary appendages at their sides are used by them to sustain them in enormous leaps which they make from branch to branch, or from one tree to another. Trusting to them they dart hither and thither with wonderful swiftness; indeed, it is hard for the eye to follow their movements. What most struck me in this unusual development was the evident approach it made towards the characteristic of birds, being as it were a link between the form of an ordinary quadruped and that of a bat, and standing in the same relation to the wing of the latter as that does to the wing of a bird. It is singular how one class of creatures merges into another in every department of animal life. Indeed, it is puzzling at times to distinguish between vegetable and animal structures, where the confines of the two kingdoms join, as the word zoophyte, which really means "a living plant," sufficiently shows. Then there is a caterpillar in New Zealand out of whose back, at a certain stage of its growth, springs a kind of fungus, which gradually drinks up the whole juices of the insect and destroys it; but this is not so much an approximation of two different orders as an accidental union. There are, however, many cases of interlinking in the different "families" into which life is divided, the study of which is exceedingly curious and interesting.

CHAPTER XIV.

Our spring crops. — Indian corn. — Pumpkins. — Melons. — Fruits — Wild flowers.

THE first thing we thought of, when the spring had fairly set in, was to get spring wheat, potatoes, Indian corn, pumpkins, oats, and other crops into the ground. Our potatoes were managed in a very primitive way, in a patch of newly-cleared ground, the surface of which, with a good deal more, we had to burn off before it could be tilled. A heavy hoe was the only implement used, a stroke or two with it sufficing to make a hole for the potato cuttings, and two or three more to drag the earth over them, so as to form a "hill." These we made at about eighteen inches apart, putting three or four pumpkin seeds in every third hill of the alternate rows. The Indian corn was planted in the same way, in hills more than a yard apart, pumpkin seeds being put in with it also. It is my favorite of all the beautiful plants of Canada. A field of it, when at its finest, is, I think, as charming a sight as could well invite the eye. Rising higher than the height of a man, its great jointed

stems are crested at the top by a long waving plume of purple, while from the upper end of each head of the grain there waves a long tassel resembling pale green silk. It is grown to a large extent in Canada, but it is most cultivated in the Western United States, many farmers on the prairies there growing a great many acres of it. It is used in many ways. When still unripe it is full of delicious milky juice, which makes it a delicacy for the table when boiled. The ripe corn makes excellent meal for cakes, etc., and is the best food for pigs or poultry, while the stalks make excellent fodder for cattle. The poor Indians grow a little corn when they grow nothing else. You may see the long strings of ears plaited together by the tough wrappings round each, and hung along poles round their wigwams to dry for winter use. They have been in possession of it no one can tell how long. When the *Mayflower* anchored, with the Pilgrim Fathers, at Plymouth Bay, in Massachusetts, in 1620, they found hoards of it buried for safety in the woods around, the Indians having taken this plan to conceal it from them.

The size of the pumpkins is sometimes enormous. I have known them so large that one would fill a wheelbarrow, and used often to think of a piece of rhyme I learned when a boy, in which it was pointed out what a mercy it was that they grew on the ground rather than aloft, acorns being quite heavy

enough in windy weather.* They are used in great quantities for "pumpkin pie," as the Canadians call it — a preparation of sweetened pumpkin spread over paste. They use them in this way, not only while fresh, but cut a great many into thin slices and dry them, that they may have this dessert in winter as well as summer. They are excellent food for pigs and cattle when broken into manageable pieces for them. I don't think any thing grew with us better than beets and carrots, the latter especially. A farmer in our neighborhood, who was partial to their growth for the sake of his horses and cattle, beat us, however, in the quantity raised on a given space, having actually gathered at the rate of thirteen hundred bushels per acre of carrots. We had a carrot show some years after in the neighboring township, at which this fact was stated, and its accuracy fairly established by the fact of others having gathered at the rate of as many as eleven hundred bushels per acre. I remember the meeting chiefly from the assertion of an Irishman present, who would not allow that any thing in Canada could surpass its counterpart in his native island, and maintained that these carrots were certainly very good, but that they were nothing to one which was grown near Cork, which was no less than eight feet nine inches in length!

A variety of melons formed one of the novelties

* Le Gland et la Citrouille: *Fables de La Fontaine*, B ix. 4.

we grew after the first season. We had nothing to do but put them in the ground and keep them free from weeds, when they began to "run" — as they did, far and near, over the ground. It was an easy way to get a luxury, for some of them are very delicious, and all are very refreshing in the sultry heat of summer. They grow in every part of Canada in great luxuriance, and without any thing like a preparation of the soil. Indeed, I once saw a great fellow of an Indian planting some, which would doubtless grow well enough, with his toes — pushing aside earth enough to receive the seeds, and then, with another motion of his foot, covering them up. Cucumbers grew in surprising numbers from a very small quantity of seed, and we had a castor-oil plant and some plants of red pepper before our doors. We had not very much time at first to attend to a vegetable garden, and therefore contented ourselves with a limited range of that kind of comforts, but it was not the fault of the soil or climate, for in no place of which I know do the various bounties of the garden grow more freely than in Canada. Cabbages, cauliflower, brocoli, peas, French beans, spinach, onions, turnips, carrots, parsnips, radishes, lettuces, beet, asparagus, celery, rhubarb, tomatoes, cucumbers, and I know not what else, need only be sown or planted to yield a bountiful return.

As to fruits, we had, for years, to buy all we used, or to gather it in the woods, but it was very

cheap when bought, and easily procured when gathered. Apples of a size and flavor almost peculiar to America, pears, plums, cherries, raspberries, currants, and strawberries, grow everywhere in amazing abundance. Peaches of the sunniest beauty and most delicate flavor are at times in some districts almost as plentiful as potatoes; but we never managed to get any from our orchard, want of knowledge on our part having spoiled our first trees, which we never afterwards exchanged for others. But on the Niagara River I have known them sell for a shilling a bushel, and every laborer you met would be devouring them by the half-dozen. A gentleman, within a few miles of us, took a fancy to cultivate grapes as extensively as he could in the open air, and succeeded so well that he told me before I left that he had sold a year's crop for about a hundred pounds. If we had had as much shrewdness as we ought to have had, we should have begun the culture of fruit rather than of mere farm produce, and I feel sure it would have paid us far better. But people, coming fresh to a country, take a long time to learn what is best for them to do, and when they have learned, have too often no sufficient means of turning to it, or, perhaps, no leisure, while many, through disappointed hopes, lose their spirit and energy.

The wild fruits we found to be as various as the cultivated kinds, and some of them were very good. The wild cherries were abundant in our bush, and

did excellently for preserves. Gooseberries, small, with a rough prickly skin and of a poor flavor, were often brought by the Indians to barter for pork or flour. Raspberries and strawberries covered the open places at the roadsides, and along the banks of "creeks;" and whortleberries and blueberries, black and red currants, juniper berries, plums and hazel nuts, were never far distant. We used to gather large quantities ourselves, and the Indians were constantly coming with pailfuls in the season. It is one of the beneficent arrangements of Providence, that, in a climate so exceedingly hot in summer, there should be such a profusion of fruits and vegetables within the reach of all, adding not only to comfort, but diffusing enjoyment, and exerting, also, a salutary influence upon health.

What shall I say of the wild flowers which burst out as the year advanced? In open places, the woods were well nigh carpeted with them, and clearings that had, for whatever reason, been for a time abandoned, soon showed like gardens with their varied colors. The scarlet lobelia, the blue lupin, gentian, columbine, violets in countless variety, honeysuckles, flinging their fragant flowers in long tresses from the trees, campanula, harebell, balsams, asters, calceolarias, the snowy lily of the valley, and clouds of wild roses, are only a few from the list. Varieties of mint, with beautiful flowers, adorned the sides of streams or the open meadows, and, resting in a floating meadow of its

own green leaves, on the still water of the river-bends, or of the creeks, whole stretches of the great white water-lily rose and fell with every gentle undulation.

There was a berry, also, the "bitter sweet," which was, in the latter part of the year, as pretty as any flower. At the end of each of the delicate twigs on which it grew, it hung in clusters, which, while unripe, were of the richest orange; but after a time, this covering opened into four golden points, and showed, in the centre, a bright scarlet berry.

CHAPTER XV.

The Indians. — Wigwams. — Dress. — Can the Indians be civilized? — Their past decay as a race. — Alleged innocence of savage life. — Narrative of Father Jogues, the Jesuit missionary.

BEFORE coming to America we had read a great deal about the Indians, and were most anxious to see them. I remember asking a lady from Canada if she was not afraid of them, and was astonished when she smiled at the question. Our minds had been filled in childhood with stories about the Mohawks, and Hurons, and other savage nations; how they rushed on the houses of settlers at the dead of night, and, after burning their houses, killed and scalped the men, and drove the women and children into captivity in the woods. Their painted faces, wild feathered dresses, and terrible war-cry had become quite familiar to our heated fancies; and we were by no means sure we should not have to endure too close an acquaintance with them when we became settlers in their country. The terrible story on which Campbell's beautiful poem, "Gertrude of Wyoming," is founded, was regarded as a sample of what we had to fear in our

lay in Canada. Moreover, the romantic accounts of Indian warriors in the novels of Cooper, and in the writings of travellers, helped to increase both our curiosity and dread, and we were all most anxious to see the representatives of the red men in our own settlement, notwithstanding our extravagant fear of them. We were not long left to think what they were like, however; for it so happened that there was an Indian settlement on land reserved for them along the river a few miles above us, and odd families ever and anon pitched their wigwams in the bush close to us. The first time they did so, we all went out eager to see them at once, but never were ridiculous high-flown notions doomed to meet a more thorough disappointment. They were encamped on the sloping bank of the creek, for it was beautiful summer weather, two or three wigwams rising under the shade of a fine oak which stretched high overhead. The wigwams themselves were simply sheets of the bark of the birch and bass-trees, laid against a slight framework of poles inside, and sloping inwards like a cone, with a hole at the top. An open space served for an entrance, a loose sheet of bark, at the side, standing ready to do duty as a door, if required. I have seen them of different shapes, but they are generally round, though a few show the fancy of their owners by resembling the sloping roof of a house laid on the ground, with the entry at one end. Bark is the common material; but in the woods on the St. Clair

river I once saw a family ensconced below some yards of white cotton, stretched over two or three rods; and near Halifax, in Nova Scotia, in winter, I noticed some wigwams made of loose broken outside slabs of logs, which the inmates had laboriously got together. In this last miserable hovel, by the way, in the midst of deep snow, with the wind whistling through it in every direction, and the thermometer below zero, lay a sick squaw and a young infant, on some straw and old blankets, to get well the best way she could. What she must have suffered from the cold can hardly be conceived. No wonder so many die of consumption.

In the group at the wigwams, as we drew near, we could see there were both men, women, and children — the men and women ornamented with great flat silver earrings, and all, including the children, bare-headed. Their hair was of jet black, and quite straight, and the men had neither beards nor whiskers. Both sexes wore their hair long, some of them plaiting it up in various ways. Their color was like that of a brown dried leaf, their cheek-bones high and wide apart; their mouths generally large, and their eyes smaller than ours; and we noticed that they all had good teeth. This is not, however, an invariable characteristic, for sometimes they suffer from their decay, like Europeans, and the doctor once told me how an Indian had waited for him at the side of the road, and, when he came up, had made signs of pain from toothache, and of

his wish that the tooth should be removed, which was forthwith done, the sufferer departing in great glee at the thought of his deliverance. "The next day," the doctor added, "the poor fellow showed his gratitude by waiting for me at the same place with a fine stone pipe-head, which he had just cut, and which he handed to me with a grunt of good-will as I came up." The dress of the women consisted of a cotton jacket, a short petticoat of cloth, with leggings of cloth underneath, which fitted tightly. Those who were doing nothing had a blanket loosely thrown over them, though it was then hot enough to do without almost any clothing. The dress of the men varied, from the merest mockery of clothing to the full suit of a cotton shirt and a pair of long leather or cloth leggings. One of them, a great strapping man, gave my sisters a great fright, shortly after, by walking into the house as noiselessly as a cat, and stalking up to the fire for a light to his pipe, with nothing on him but a cotton shirt. Pulling out a piece of burning wood and kindling his pipe, he sat down on a chair beside them to enjoy a smoke, without ever saying a word, and went off, when he had finished, with equal silence. The little children were naked either altogether, or with the exception of a piece of cotton round their loins; and the babies, of which there are always some in every Indian encampment, peered out with their bright black beads of eyes from papooses, either hung up on a forked pole or

resting against a tree. These "papooses" were quite a novelty to us. They were simply a flat board a little longer than the infant, with a bow of hickory bent in an arch over the upper end, to protect the head, and some strings at the sides to tie the little creature safely. There it lay or stood, with abundant wrappings round it, but with its legs and arms in hopeless confinement, its little eyes and thin trembling lips alone telling the story of its tender age. To lift it was like taking hold of a fiddle, only you could hardly hurt it so easily as you might the instrument. Not a cry was to be heard, for Indian babies seem always good, and nobody was uselessly occupied in taking care of them, for, where they were, no injury could come near them. I should not myself like to be tied up in such a way, but it seems to do famously with them. One of the women had her child at her back, inside her blanket, its little brown face and black eyes peering over her shoulder. Another was putting some sticks under a pot, hung from a pole, which rested on the forks of two others; and one or two were enjoying a gossip on the grass. The men, of course, were doing nothing, while the boys were amusing themselves with their bows and arrows, in the use of which they are very expert. We had been told that they could hit almost any thing, and resolved to try them with some coppers, which were certainly very small objects to strike in the air; but the little fellows were wonderful archers. Each half-penny

got its quietus the moment it left our fingers, and they even hit a sixpence which Henry, in a fit of generosity, threw up. Birds must have a very small chance of escape when they get within range of their arrows. It brought to my mind the little Balearic islanders, who, in old times, could not get their dinners till they had hit them from the top of a high pole with their slings, and country boys I had seen in England, whom long practice had taught to throw stones so exactly that they could hit almost any thing. Indeed, there seems to be nothing that we may not learn if we only try long enough, and with sufficient earnestness.

It used to astonish me to see the Indians on the "Reserve" living in bark wigwams, close to comfortable log-houses erected for them by Government, but which they would not take as a gift. I used to think it a striking proof of the difficulty of breaking off the habits formed in uncivilized life, and so indeed it is; but the poor Indians had more sense in what seems madness than I at first supposed. It appears they feel persuaded that living one part of the year in the warmth and comfort of a log-house makes them unable to bear the exposure during the rest, when they are away in the woods on their hunting expeditions. But why they should not give up these wandering habits, which force such hardships on them, and repay them so badly after all, is wonderful, and must be attributed to the inveterate force of habit. It seems to be very

hard to get wildness out of the blood when once fairly in it. It takes generations in most cases to make such men civilized. Lord Dartmouth once founded a college for Indians in Massachusetts, when it was a British province, and some of them were collected and taught English and the classics, with the other branches of a liberal education; but it was found, after they had finished their studies, that they were still Indians, and that, as soon as they had a chance, they threw away their books and English clothes, to run off again to the woods and wander about in clothes of skins, and live in wigwams. It is the same with the aborigines of Australia. The missionaries and their wives have tried to get them taught the simple rudiments of English life — the boys to work and the girls to sew — but it has been found that, after a time, they always got like caged birds beating against their prison, and that they could not be kept from darting off again to the wilderness. The New Zealander stands, so far as I know, a solitary and wonderful exception to this rule, the sons of men who were cannibals have already adopted civilization to so great an extent as to be their own shipbuilders, sailors, captains, clerks, schoolmasters, and farmers.

It seems almost the necessary result of civilized and uncivilized people living together in the same country that the latter, as the weaker, should fade away before their rivals, if they do not thoroughly

adopt their habits. The aboriginal inhabitants of the Sandwich Islands are rapidly approaching extinction in spite of all efforts to secure their permanence. The vices of civilization have corrupted the very blood of the race, till they seem hopelessly fading away. The natives of New Holland are vanishing in the same way, though not, perhaps, from the same immediate causes. The Caribs of the West Indies, who were so fierce and powerful in the days of Columbus and his successors, are now extinct. It is much the same with the Red Man of America. The whole continent was theirs from north to south, and from east to west, but now they are only to be found crowded into corners of our different provinces, a poor and miserable remnant, or as fugitives in remote prairies and forests, for they have been nearly banished altogether from the settled territories of the States. It is a curious fact, also, that this is not the first time widely-spread races of their color have been swept away from the same vast surface. Remains of former populations, which have perished before those who themselves are now perishing, are to be found in many parts, as in the huge burial mounds of Ohio, and the ruined cities of Guatemala and Yucatan. Canada has now settlements of Indians in various places, but they are, altogether, few in number. One is on Manitoulin Island, near the northern shore of Lake Huron, where a clergyman of the Church of England, Mr. Peter Jacobs, himself an Indian, minis-

ters, as a zealous and efficient missionary; another, at the head of River St. Clair, stretches down the bank for four or five miles, the picture of neglect and aversion to work, in the midst of improvement at each side; one on Walpole Island, down the river, where the missionary is one of the most earnest and laborious I have had the pleasure of knowing; one on the banks of the river Thames, under the charge of the Moravian brethren — the wreck of tribes who left the States in the war, last century — forming, with another settlement on the Grand River, near Brantford, the representatives of those who, in Lord Chatham's day, brought down that great orator's terrible denunciation of the "calling into civilized alliance the wild and inhuman inhabitants of the woods, and delegating to the tomahawk and the scalping-knife of the merciless savage the rights of disputed property." There are some others to the north and east of Toronto, but their numbers altogether are but the shadow of what they were once. Old Courtenay, speaking to me one day about those on the River St. Clair, where he had lived from his childhood, shook his head as a wandering, miserable family passed by on their wretched ponies, and said, feelingly, "Poor things! they'll soon follow the rest. I remember when there were a hundred on the river for twenty there are now. They all go at the lungs. Lying out in the wet brings on the terrible cough, and they're gone." The Indian Agent for the west of the

province told me, however, when in England, lately that they were keeping up their numbers now ; but I can hardly see how it is possible, if they do not take more care of themselves. The very moccasins they wear for shoes are fit, in my opinion, to kill any one — mere coverings of deer leather, which soak up water like blotting-paper, and keep them as if perpetually standing in a pool. Then they get spirits from the storekeepers, in spite of every effort on the part of government to prevent it, and they often suffer such privations for want of food as must tell fearfully on their health. I have often watched them passing on ponies or a-foot ; if the former, the squaws sitting cross-legged on the bare backs, like men, with their children round them, and guiding their animals by a rope halter ; the men carrying only a gun, if they were rich enough to have one ; and I have thought of the contrast between their present state and the story of their numbers and fierceness, as handed down in the old French narratives of two hundred years ago ; how they kept the French in perpetual fear, burning their houses and even their towns ; how the woods swarmed, in different parts, with their different independent nations — The Hurons, the Algonquins, the Iroquois, the Ojibbeways — and how, in later years, they played so terrible a part in the French and American wars with Great Britain. They seem like snow in summer, when only a patch lies here and there, awaiting speedy disappearance, of all that covered hill

and valley in its season. Some tribes, indeed, have passed away altogether since the first landing of Europeans on the continent. Those at Nonantum, in Massachusetts, for whom the great missionary, John Eliot, translated the Bible two hundred years ago, are all gone, so that the book which once spoke to them of the world to come, and a copy of which still survives in the museum at Boston, now lies open without a living creature who can read it. The Mandans, a great tribe in the western prairies — the only tribe, indeed, of whom I have heard, among the Indians of the present day, as building regular fortified and permanent villages and towns, have been entirely swept off within the last thirty years by the smallpox, which was brought among them by some poor trader.

It is a striking contradiction to what we sometimes hear of the happy innocence of savage life, that the Indians, when they had all the country to themselves, were continually at war with one another. The Mohawks, who lived in the northern part of the United States, seem especially to have been given to strife, often leaving their own side of the great lakes to make desolating inroads into Canada, until their name became such a word of terror that the very mention of it spread alarm in an encampment. Even at this day, I have been assured that to raise the cry of "the Mohawks are coming," would strike a delirium of panic through a whole settlement. They seem to think they are

still somewhere not far off, and may reappear at any moment. But though the Mohawks may have left so blood-stained a memory of themselves, it may be safely said that there was hardly one tribe better than another. The pages of the old chroniclers are red with the continual record of their universal conflicts. At the same time, it is curious, as showing how widely-spread the terrors of the Mohawk name came to be, that the dissolute young men of Addison's day, who were wont to find pleasure in acts of violence and terror in the streets of London by night, called themselves "Mohocks." The French appear to have themselves been in part to blame for their sufferings from the Indians, from the wars they excited between rival nations, and the readiness with which they furnished their allies with the means of destruction. The passions thus kindled too often recoiled upon themselves. Their traders had no scruples in supplying to any extent the three great cravings of an Indian — rum, tobacco, and scalping-knives — the first of which led, in innumerable cases, to the too ready use of the last. A scalping-knife, by the way, is an ugly weapon, with a curved blade like an old-fashioned razor, but sharp at the point, and was used to cut off the skin from the top of a dead enemy's head, with the hair on it, to preserve as a proof of their warlike exploits. The number of scalps any warrior possessed being hailed as the measure of his renown in his tribe, the desire

for them became as much a passion with an Indian as the wish for the Victoria Cross with a British soldier, and raised an almost ungovernable excitement in their breasts when an opportunity for gratifying it offered itself. A story is told of a British officer who was travelling many years ago in America, with an Indian for his guide, waking suddenly one morning and finding him standing over him in a state of frenzy, his features working in the conflict of overpowering passions like those of one possessed, his knife in his hand, ready, if the evil spirit triumphed, to destroy his master for the sake of his scalp. The officer's waking, happily broke the spell, and the Indian flung himself at the feet of his intended victim, told him his temptation, and rejoiced that he had escaped. He had seen him playing with his long soft hair, he said, and could not keep from thinking what a nice scalp it would furnish, till he had all but murdered him to get it." *

That the very name of "Indian" should have filled the heart of all who heard it in old times with horror is not to be wondered at. However miserable they may be now, in great part through their constant wars among themselves, they were frightfully cruel and bloodthirsty savages when their nation's tribes were numerous. We have little idea,

* The ancient Scythians, also, scalped their enemies. (*Herodotus*, Bk. iv. 64.) The Indians are only Scythians or Tartars who have fallen from the pastoral to the hunting life

from anything Canada now offers, as to their manners and habits, or their character, in the days of their fierce power; but it cannot be said that this is owing to their being civilized, or to their having become more humane. They are still as wild, to a large extent, as the wild beasts of the woods, in all their habits — still wanderers — still idle and thriftless — still without any arts — and still without any thing like national progress. It rises only from their being a crushed and dispirited remnant, who have lost the boldness of their ancestors, and are fairly cowed and broken by a sense of their weakness. Out of the reach of civilization they are still the same as ever; and what that was in the days when they were the lords of Canada, we may judge from the accounts left by the French missionaries, who then lived among them. The following narrative, which I translate from its quaint old French, has not, I believe, been printed before in English, and takes us most vividly back to those bygone times.* As a Protestant, I do not agree with every thing that it contains, but you can remember that it is the narrative of a Jesuit priest.

Father Jogues was of a good family of the town of Orleans, in France, and was sent to Canada by the general of his order in 1636. He went up to the country of the Hurons the same year, and stayed

* "Relations des Jesuites dans la Nouvelle France." Quebec, 1853.

there till June, 1642, when he was sent to Quebec on the affairs of the "great and laborious mission" among that people. Father Lallemant, at that time superior of the mission, sent for him, and proposed the voyage, which was a terrible task, owing to the difficulty of the roads, and very dangerous from the risk of ambuscades of the Iroquois, who massacred every year a number of the Indians allied with the French. He proceeds to say, —

"The proposition being made to me, I embraced it with all my heart. Behold us, then, on the way, and in dangers of every kind. We had to disembark forty times, and forty times to carry our canoes, and all our baggage, past the currents and rapids which we met in a voyage of about three hundred leagues; and although the savages who conducted us were very expert, we could not avoid the frequent upsetting of our canoes, accompanied with great danger to our lives, and the loss of our little luggage. At last, twenty-three days after our departure from the Hurons, we arrived, very weary, at Three Rivers, whence we descended to Quebec. Our business being completed in a fortnight, we kept the feast of St. Ignatius; and the next day, the 1st of August, 1642, left Three Rivers to retrace our steps to the country whence we had come. The first day was favorable to us; the second, we fell into the hands of the Iroquois. We were forty in number, divided among different canoes

and that which carried the advance guard having discovered, on the banks of the great river, some tracks of men's feet newly impressed on the sand and clay, made it known. When we had landed, some said they were traces of an enemy, others were sure they were the footmarks of Algonquins, our allies. In this contention of opinion Eustache Ahatsistari, to whom all the others deferred on account of his deeds of arms and his bravery, cried out—'Whether they are friends or enemies does not matter; I see by their tracks that they are not more in number than ourselves; let us advance, and fear nothing.'

"We had hardly gone on a half league when the enemy, hidden in the grass and brush rose, with a loud cry, discharging on our canoes a perfect hail of bullets. The noise of their arquebuses so terrified a part of our Hurons, that they abandoned their canoes, and their arms, and all their goods, to save themselves by flight into the depths of the woods. This volley did us little harm; no one lost his life. One Huron only had his hand pierced by a ball, and our canoes were broken in several places. There were four Frenchmen of us, one of whom being in the rear-guard, saved himself with the Hurons, who fled before approaching the enemy. Eight or ten Christian catechumens joined us, and having got them to offer a short prayer, they made head courageously against the enemy, and though they were thirty men against a dozen or fourteen,

our people sustained their attack valiantly. But perceiving that another band of forty Iroquois, who were in ambush on the other side of the river, were crossing to fall on them, they lost heart, and, like those who had been less engaged, they fled, abandoning their comrades in the *mêlée*. One Frenchman — René Goupil — since dead, being no longer supported by those who followed him, was taken, with some Hurons who had proved the most courageous. I saw this disaster from a place which effectually concealed me from the enemy, the thickets and reeds furnishing a perfect screen, but the thought of thus turning it to account never entered my mind. Could I, I said to myself, leave our French, and these good neophytes, and these poor catechumens, without giving them the helps with which the true Church of God has intrusted me? Flight seemed to me horrible. It is necessary, said I to myself, that my body should suffer the fire of this world to deliver these poor souls from the flames of Hell — it is necessary that it should die a momentary death to procure them life eternal.

"My conclusion being thus taken without any great struggle in my mind, I called one of the Iroquois who was left behind to guard the prisoners. He, seeing me, was at first afraid to approach, fearing an ambush. 'Approach,' said I, 'fear nothing; conduct me to the French and Hurons you hold captive.' He advances, and having seized me, adds me to the number of those who, in a worldly point

of view, would be regarded as utterly wretched. Meanwhile, those who were chasing the fugitives led back some of them, and I confessed and made Christians of those who were not so. At last they led back that brave chief, Eustache, who cried out on seeing me, that he had sworn to live and die with me. Another Frenchman, named William Couture, seeing the Hurons take to flight, saved himself, like them, in the forest; but remorse having seized him at the thought of abandoning his friends, and the fear of being thought a coward tormenting him, he turned to come back. Just then five Iroquois came upon him, one of whom aimed at him but without effect, his piece having snapped, on which the Frenchman instantly shot him dead. His musket was no sooner discharged than the four were on him in a moment, and having stripped him perfectly naked, wellnigh murdered him with their clubs, pulled out his nails with their teeth, pounding the bleeding tips to cause greater agony; and, finally, after stabbing him with a knife in one hand, led him to us in a sad plight, bound fast. On my seeing him, I ran from my guards and fell on his neck, but the Iroquois, seeing us thus tenderly affected, though at first astonished, looked on in silence, till, all at once, thinking, perhaps, I was praising him for having killed one of their number, they ran at me with blows of their fists, with clubs, and with the stocks of their arquebuses, felling me to the ground half dead. When I began to breathe

again, those who, hitherto, had not injured me, came up and tore out the nails of my fingers with their teeth, and than bit, one after another, the ends of the two forefingers thus stripped of their nails, causing me great pain — grinding and craunching them to pieces, indeed, as if they had been pounded between two stones, so that fragments of the bones came out. They treated the good Rene Goupil in the same way, but they did no harm for the time to Hurons, so enraged were they at the French for not accepting peace on their terms the year before.

"All being at last assembled, and their scouts having returned from chasing the fugitives, the barbarians divided their booty among themselves, rejoicing with loud cries. While they were thus engaged I revisited all the captives, baptizing those who had not been so before, and encouraging the poor creatures, assuring them that their reward would far surpass their tortures. I perceived after making this round that we were twenty-two in number, not counting three Hurons killed on the spot.

"Behold us, then, being led into a country truly strange to us. It is true that, during the thirteen days we were on this journey, I suffered almost insupportable bodily torments and mortal anguish of spirit; hunger, burning heat — besides the imprecations and threats of these leopards in human shape — and in addition to these miseries, the pain

of our wounds, which, for want of dressing, rotted till they bred worms, caused us much distress; but all these things seemed light to me, in comparison with my internal suffering at the sight of our first and most ardent Christians among the Hurons in such circumstances. I had thought they would be pillars of the new-born Church, and I saw them become victims of these bloodthirsty savages.

"A week after our departure from the banks of the St. Lawrence, we met two hundred Iroquois in eager search for Frenchmen, or their Indian allies, wherever they could meet them. Unhappily, it is a belief among these barbarians, that those who are going to war are prosperous in proportion as they are cruel to their enemies; and, I assure you, they made us feel the effect of this unfortunate opinion. Having perceived us they first thanked the sun for having caused us to fall into their hands, and those of their countrymen, and then fired a salute in honor of their victory. This done, they went into the woods, to seek for clubs or thorns, as their fancy led them; then, thus armed, they formed a lane, a hundred on each side, and made us pass, naked, down this bitter path of anguish, each one trying who could strike oftenest and hardest. As I had to pass last, I was the most exposed to their rage, but I had hardly got half through, before I fell under the weight of this hail of reiterated blows; nor did I try to rise; partly, indeed, because I wished to die on the spot. Seeing me down, they

threw themselves on me, and God alone knows the length of time I endured this, and the number of blows which were inflicted on my body, but sufferings borne for His glory are full of joy and honor! The savages, seeing I had fallen, not by chance, but that I wished to die, took a cruel compassion on me, lifting me up, in the intention of keeping me so that I should reach their country alive, and then led me, all bleeding, to an open knoll. When I had come to myself they made me descend, tormented me in a thousand ways, made me the butt of their taunts, and recommenced beating me, letting off another hail of blows on my head, neck, and body. They then burned one finger, and cranched another with their teeth, and pressed and twisted those which were already mangled, with the rage of demons. They tore my wounds open with their nails, and when my strength failed they put fire to my arms and thighs. My companions were treated pretty nearly like myself. One of the barbarians, advancing with a great knife, seized my nose in his left hand to cut it off, but, though he attempted this twice, he was hindered in some way from completing his design. Had he done it, they would at last have killed me, for they always murder those who are much mutilated.

"Having so far satisfied their bloodthirstiness on our poor frames, these savages departed to pursue their route, while we continued ours.

"On the tenth day, we reached a place where it

was necessary to quit the waterside and travel by land. This journey, which was about four days long, was very painful, he who was appointed to guard me not being able to carry all his plunder, and giving me a part to carry on my back, all flayed as it was. We ate nothing for three days but a little wild fruit, which we pulled in passing. The heat of the sun at the height of the summer, and our wounds, weakened us much, so that we had to walk behind the others, and they being much scattered, I told René he should try to save himself; but he would not leave me, though he could easily have got off. I, myself, could not think of forsaking my poor little flock. On the eve of the Assumption, we reached a small stream, a quarter of a league from the first town of the Iroquois, where we found the banks lined on both sides with a number of men armed with clubs, which they used on us with their wonted ferocity. There were only two of my nails remaining, and these they wrenched off with their teeth, tearing away the flesh underneath, and bearing it to the very bones with their nails, which they let grow very long.

"After they had thus satisfied their cruelty, they led us in triumph into this first village, all the young people being ranged in rows outside the gates, armed, some with sticks, others with iron ramrods, which they get from the Dutch.* They

* Probably the Dutch settlers in what is now the western part of New York State.

made us march — a Frenchman at the head, another in the middle, of the Hurons, and myself the last. We were made to follow one another at equal distances, and, that our tormentors might be the better able to beat us at their ease, some Iroquois threw themselves into our line to keep us from running off, or avoiding any blows. I was naked, with the exception of a shirt, like a criminal, and the others were entirely naked, except poor René Goupil, to whom they showed the same favor as to me. We were hardly able to reach the stage prepared for us in the middle of the village, so fearfully beaten were we; our bodies livid and our faces bloody. Nothing white remained visible of René's face but his eyes, he was so disfigured. When mounted on the stage we had a short respite, except from their violent words, which did not hurt us, but it was soon over. A chief cried out that they must 'fondle the Frenchman,' which was no sooner said than done — a wretch, leaping on the scaffold and giving each of us three great blows with a stick, but not touching the Hurons. Meanwhile, the others who were standing close to us, drawing their knives, treated me as the chief — that is, used me worst — the deference paid me by the Hurons having procured me this sad honor. An old man took my left hand, and ordered an Algonquin woman to cut off one of my fingers, which she did, after some reluctance, when she saw she would be forced to obey, — cutting off my left thumb. They did this to the

others also. I picked up my thumb from the scaffold, but one of my French companions told me that if they saw me with it they would make me eat it, and swallow it raw, and that I had better throw it away, which I did. They used an oyster shell to cut the thumbs of the others, to give them more pain. The blood flowing so that we were like to faint, an Iroquois tore off a piece of my shirt and tied up the wounds, and this was all the bandage or dressing we got. When evening came we were brought down to be led to the wigwams to be made sport for the children. They gave us a little boiled Indian corn for food, and made us lie down on a piece of bark, tying our arms and legs to four stakes fived in the ground, like a St. Andrew's cross. The children, emulating the cruelty of their parents, threw burning embers on our stomachs, taking pleasure in seeing our flesh scorch and roast. What hideous nights! To be fixed in one painful position, unable to turn or move, incessantly attacked by swarms of vermin, with our bodies smarting from recent wounds, and from the suffering caused by older ones in a state of putrefaction, with the scantiest food to keep up what life was left; of a truth these torments were terrible, but God is great! At sunrise, for three following days, they led us back to the scaffold, the nights being passed as I have described."

Thus far we have given the father's own words, and must condense what remains to be told: —

After three days were over the victims were led to two other villages, and exposed naked, under a burning sun, with their wounds untended, to the same miseries as they had passed through in the first. At the second, an Indian, perceiving that poor Couture had not yet lost a finger, though his hands were all torn to pieces, made him cut off his own forefinger with a blunt knife, and when he could not sever it entirely, the savage took and twisted it, and pulled it away by main force, dragging out a sinew a palm in length, the poor arm swelling instantly with the agony. At the third village, a new torture was added, by hanging poor Jogues by his arms, so high that his feet did not touch the ground; his entreaty to be released only making them tie him the tighter, till a strange Indian, apparently of his own accord, mercifully cut him down. At last some temporary suspension of his sufferings approached. Fresh prisoners arrived, and a council determined that the French should be spared, in order to secure advantages from their countrymen. Their hands being useless from mutilation, they had to be fed like infants, but some of the women, true to the kindly nature of their sex, took pity on their sufferings, and did what they could to relieve them. Meanwhile, Couture was sent to another village, and Père Jogues and René remained together.

Unfortunately, however, of the three, only Couture could reckon upon the preservation of his life.

It was the custom with the savages, that when a prisoner was handed over to some particular Indian, to supply a blank in his household, caused by the death of any of its members in battle, he was forthwith adopted as one of the tribe, and was thenceforth safe; but as long as he was not thus bestowed, he might be killed, at the caprice of any one, without the least warning. Of the three, only Couture had been thus guaranteed security of life; the two others felt that their existence still hung by a hair. Nor was this long without being put to a sad proof, for René — full of zeal for what he thought would benefit the souls of the young Indians — being in the habit of making on them the sign of the CROSS, had taken a child's hand before making the sign on its brow, when an old man, seeing him, turned to its father, and told him he should kill that dog, for he was doing to his boy what the Dutch had told them would not only do no good, but would do harm. The advice was speedily acted on; two blows of an axe on his head, as the two were returning from prayer outside the village, stretched the martyr lifeless, and poor René's body was then dragged to the bed of a rivulet, from which a heavy storm washed it, through the night, so that his companions could never again find it. This was in September, 1642, two months after their leaving Three Rivers. The position of father Jogues after this murder may easily be imagined. His life, he tells us, was as uncertain as the stay of

a bird on a branch, from which it may fly at any moment. But the good man had devotion sufficient to bear him up, amidst all evil and danger. His mind, kept in constant excitement, found support in comforting dreams that soothed his slumbers. In these visions he would see, at times, the village in which he lived, and in which he had suffered so much, changed to a scene of surpassing glory, with the words of Scripture, written over its gates, "They shall praise Thy name;" and at other times his thoughts in sleep would be brightened by the belief that the agonies he had endured were sent by his Father in heaven to fit him for eternal joy, so that, he tells us, he would often say of them when he awoke, "Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."

At the beginning of winter he was, at last, given to a family as their slave, to attend them in the chase, to which they went off thirty leagues, staying two months at it. Cold though it then was, his only clothing all this time was a shirt and a poor pair of drawers, with leggings, and ragged shoes of soft leather. The thickets tore his skin, and his feet were cut by the stones, clods, and sharp edges of ice. Finding him useless in hunting, they set him to woman's work, requiring him to gather and bring in logs for the fire. Half naked, chapped and hacked in every part by the cold, this was a change he rejoiced in, as it gave him the great advantage of privacy, which, he tells us, he employed for eight

and ten hours together in prayer, before a rude cross which he had set up. But his masters having found out how he spent his time, broke his cross, felled trees close to him to terrify him, and when he returned to the wigwam with his load, played him a thousand cruel tricks, to get him to desist. One would level his bow at him, as if about to shoot him; another would swing his axe over his head, and tell him he must quit his charms. They declared that his sorceries spoiled their hunting; and at last conceived such a horror of him, that they thought his touch pollution, and would not let him use any thing in the wigwams. Had he been willing to join them in their ways, it would have fared differently with him; but, starving as he had been, he refused to partake of the venison which they had in abundance, because they offered to the spirit of the chase all that they took. As soon as he knew of this, he told them plainly he could not eat what had been devoted to the devil; and fell back on his boiled Indian corn.

Having learned that some old people were about to return to the village, Jogues asked permission to go thither with them. They sent him, therefore, but without a tinder-box, and without shoes, though the snow was now very deep on the ground, it being in December. Moreover, they made him carry a huge burden of smoked meat for the thirty leagues of journey they had to take, weak and wretched though he was. At one place, crossing a

deep rivulet, over a felled tree, a squaw, who had an infant and a heavy load on her back, and was in poor health, slipped off and fell into the stream; on which Jogues, seeing that her burden was making her sink, threw off his own, and plunged in, and cutting away the thongs, carried her to the bank, where the prompt kindling of a fire by the Indians, alone, saved the three from being frozen to death. The little child being very ill, he tells us "he baptized it forthwith; and in truth," he adds, "sent it to Paradise, as it died two days after." However we may differ from him as to the efficacy of his act, we cannot withhold our admiration of the noble spirit that made him cling to what he thought a work of duty and love, even in his greatest trials.

He had hardly reached the village when he was sent back again with a sack of corn, so heavy, that what with weakness and the slipperiness of the ground, he lost his way, and found himself back again in the camp before he knew where he was. This misadventure was a new cause of suffering for him. Every ill name that could be thought of was given him, and, what was much worse, he was put into a wigwam with the same man who had torn out his nails, and who was now lying in the utmost filth and wretchedness, through the effects of some putrid disease. For fifteen days he had to serve as a slave amidst these horrors, until his owners, returning from the chase, took him to their own dwelling.

During the winter, he managed, at great risk, to visit the different villages of the Indians, to encourage the Huron captives. His patience, meanwhile, was gaining him the respect even of such monsters as these. The mother of his host seemed touched by his bearing, and this was increased by his kindness to one who had been among his most terrible enemies, but who was now lying covered with sores. Jogues visited him frequently, consoled him in his illness, and often went to seek berries for him to refresh him. About March he was taken by his hosts to their fishing-ground — a deliverance from the noise of the village which was delightful to him, though he still had the same work of collecting and bringing in wood for the fire. He was now treated comparatively kindly, but even here he was in danger. A war party had been gone for six months, and not having been heard of, were thought to have been destroyed, and this was, by at least one, who had a relative with it, attributed to the enchantments of the missionary. But, providentially, the day before he was to have been killed, the warriors arrived, bringing twenty prisoners, in torturing whom Jogues was forgotten. They forthwith began public rejoicings; scorching, roasting, and, at last, eating these poor victims. "I think," says Jogues, "that the devils in hell must do something the same, at the coming of souls condemned to their flames."

At the end of April, a Sokokis chief made his

appearance in the Iroquois country, charged with presents, which he came to offer for the ransom of the missionary, who was known among the tribes by the name of Ondesson. The presents, he said, came from the French, and he had a letter from the governor for Ondesson. This embassy raised the credit of Jogues, and got him, for the time, some pity; but they took the presents, and kept him still in captivity. At last, having been sent, in 1643, to a fishery, which was near a station of the Dutch, he was rescued from the clutches of his tormentors by their head man, who, however, having left shortly after, handed him to the care of a subordinate, at whose hands he suffered extremely from hunger and thirst, and from the fear of falling again into the power of the Iroquois. After a time, he was taken down the Hudson to what was then the settlement of Manhattan, but is now the city of New York, and from thence sailed to France, by way of England. On the 15th January, 1644, he returned to the college of his order, at Rennes. In the spring of 1645, he was ready, once more, to return to Canada, and sailed from Rochelle to Montreal; and peace having been made in the interval with the Iroquois, he was chosen as the pioneer of a new mission among them. On the 16th May, 1646, in company with French officials, he set out on a preliminary journey, to make the necessary preparations, and to ratify the peace, returning to Three Rivers in the end of June.

Resolved to lose no time, now that the way was clear, in organizing his mission, though with a presentiment that it would end in his death, he proceeded, three weeks after, once more on his way to the scene of his former sufferings, in company with a young Frenchman, in a canoe, taking with him some Hurons as guides. But he went only to meet the death he had forboded. He had hardly reached the Iroquois country when he and his companion were attacked, plundered, stripped naked, and subjected to the same menaces and blows which he had experienced before. A letter from the Dutch traders, some time after, related how their captors, on the very day of their arrival, told them they would be killed, adding, that they might be of good cheer, for they would not burn them, but would simply cut off their heads, and stick them on the palisades of the village, to let other Frenchmen, whom they expected to take, see them on their coming. The immediate cause of their murder was, that the Indians insisted that Jogues had left the devil among some luggage he had given them to keep for him, and that their crop of Indian corn had thus been spoiled. On the 18th October, 1646, the end of his sufferings came at last. Having been called from his wigwam to the public lodge on that evening, to supper, an Indian, standing behind the door, split his skull, and that of his companion, with an axe; and on the morrow, the gate of the village was gar-

nished with their disfigured heads. Only one division of the nation, however — that with which he lived, whose distinguishing sign or title was that of the Bear — seems to have been privy to their murder. The other two — the divisions of the Wolf and the Tortoise — resented the massacre, as if committed on two members of their own tribes.

And thus we take leave of the Jesuit martyr and his remarkable story.

CHAPTER XVI.

The medicine-man. — Painted faces. — Medals. — An Embassy. — Religious notions. — Feast of the dead. — Christian Indians. — Visit to the Indians on Lake Huron. — Stolidity of the Indians. — Henry exorcises an Indian's rifle.

THE great man among all tribes of Indians that are not very greatly changed is the medicine-man — a kind of sorcerer, who acts at once as priest and physician. Arrayed in a strange dress of bear-skins, or painted leather, with his head hidden in the scalp of some animal, or decorated with an extraordinary crest of feathers, this dignitary still reigns with more power than the chiefs in the outlying portions of British America. Their modes of treatment are strange enough. A poor infant, in one of the settlements, lay ill of fever, and the mother, not knowing what to do for it, summoned the medicine-man to her aid. He came with his assistant, in full costume, and, having entered the wigwam where the poor little creature lay, in a bark cradle, filled with the dust of rotten wood, began his doctoring by hollowing a mystic circle in the ground round it, within which none but those he permitted were to enter. Then, taking a drum

which he had with him, or rather, a double tambourine, filled inside with little stones, he commenced rattling it over the child, singing meanwhile with all his might. The noise was enough to have given a fever to a person in health, and was fit to have killed a sick baby outright; but he kept thumping away, first at its ears — the little creature crying with fright — then at its back and its sides, till the sound was wellnigh deafening. Next came a mysterious course of deep breathing from the bottom of his stomach, all round the child's body, which completed his treatment. Strange to say, the child got better, and of course the faith in the conjurer greatly increased. "There was a black thing in its inside," he said, "which needed to be driven out, and he had done it by the noise and singing." It must, indeed, have been in spite of him, instead of by his help, that the poor child was restored.

The dress of the Indians varies at different times, and according to the degree of civilization they have reached. Here and there you meet with one who has adopted European clothing, but these are rarely seen. They held a feast on a mound, by the roadside, in the summer after we went to the river — men, women, and children mustering to take part in it. Their clothing, except that of one or two, was about the same as usual — that is, a shirt and leggings, or the shirt only; but their faces showed a most elaborate care in "the getting up." Paint

of different colors was lavishly expended on them. One had his nose a bright blue; his eyes, eyelids, and cheeks, black; and the rest of his face a lively red. Others had streaks of red, black, and blue, drawn from the ears to the mouth. Others were all black, except the top of the forehead, and the parts round the ears, and the tip of the chin. Two lads amused me by the pride they evidently took in their faces; that of the one being ornamented by a stroke of vermilion, broad and bright, upward and downward, from each corner of the mouth, in a slanting direction; while that of the other rejoiced in a broad streak of red and blue, straight across his cheeks, from each side of his nose. The solemnities consisted of speeches from their orators, which were fluent enough, and were accompanied with a great deal of gesticulation, but were totally incomprehensible to me. Then followed a dance, in which all the men joined; some women, sitting in the middle, beating a rude drum with a bone, while the men formed in a circle outside, and each commenced moving slowly round, lifting his legs as high as possible, at the risk, I thought, of throwing the dancer before him off his balance, by some unhappy accident, which, however, they were skilful enough to avoid. Meanwhile, the orchestra kept up a monotonous thumping, accompanied by a continuous grunting noise, which passed for singing. There could be nothing more ludicrous than to see them with all solemnity pacing round, each

with a leg in the air, as if they had been doing something awfully important. Dancing ended, the reward of their labors followed. A huge kettle, hanging from a stout pole, over a fire close by, proved to have for its contents the carcass of a large dog — one of the many who prowl round all wigwams — but it must have been fattened for the occasion, as they are lean enough generally. Hands and mouths were the only implements for the repast, but they served the purpose. The poor dog made its way, with amazing rapidity, down the crowd of hungry throats; but the sight so disgusted me that I hastily left them.

The Indians are very loyal in every part of British America. A number of old men are still alive who hold medals for their services in the war of 1812-14 with the United States, and very proud they are of them. I remember finding a deputation from some tribe returning from a visit to the Governor-General, on board one of the lake steamers, and was struck with the great silver medal, almost like a porter's badge, which the eldest wore on his breast, with the well-known profile of King George III. on it. By the way, one of the three or four Indians of the party was the handsomest man of the race I ever saw — tall, of full figure, with exquisite features, and soft curling hair. He must surely have been partly white. The dress they wore showed strikingly the meeting of the old wildness and the new civilization. That of the old bearer

of the medal consisted of a very broad-brimmed, high-crowned, and broad-belted black hat — such a hat as I never saw except among the Indians, and which must have been made from a pattern specially designed to please them by its extraordinary size; a light brown shabby frock-coat, with very short tails and large brass buttons; a great white blanket thrown over it, and a pair of ordinary trowsers, with moccasins on his feet, completing the costume. There was a great slit in his ears for ornaments; a string of wampum hung round his neck, and in one hand lay a long Indian pipe, while, from the other, the skin of a fox, made into a tobacco-pouch, hung at his side. One of the others had leggings instead of trowsers, with broad bands of beads at the knees to fasten them, and a bag about the size of a lady's reticule, with a deep fringe of green threads nine or ten inches long, all round it, hung from his arm. I have no doubt that even the feeble remnant of the race that still survives would at once offer to fight for our Queen if their services should ever unfortunately be needed. "Their great mother across the waters" is the object of as much loyal pride to them as to any of her countless subjects. Some years ago a United States officer was removing some Indians from the settled parts to the other side of the Mississippi, and had encamped one day, when he saw a party approaching. Taking out his glass, he found that they were Indians, and forthwith sent off an Indian from his

own band to meet them, with the stars and stripes on a flag. No sooner was the republican banner displayed, than, to the astonishment of the officer, the strange Indian unrolled the RED CROSS OF ST. GEORGE, and held it up as that under which he ranged. The American wanted him to exchange flags, but he would not; for, said he, "I live near the Hudson Bay Company, and they gave me this flag, and told me that it came from my great mother across the great waters, and would protect me and my wife and children, wherever we might go. I have found it is true as the white man said, and *I will never part with it.*"

One of the most intelligent Indians I ever met was a missionary among his countrymen in the Far West, who happened to be on a steamer with me. He gave me a great deal of information respecting the religious notions of his people, one part of which I thought very curious. He said that the Indians believed that, at death, the spirits of men went to the west, and came to a broad river, over which there was no bridge but the trunks of trees laid endwise across. On the further side stretched prairies abounding with all kinds of game, and every possible attraction to the Indian, to reach which, every one, as he came, ventured on the perilous path that offered the means of getting over. But the wicked could not, by any means, keep their footing. The logs rolled about under them till they slipped into the river, which bore them hopelessly away. The

good Indian, on the contrary, found every thing easy. The logs lay perfectly still beneath his tread, some kind influence kept him safely poised at each treacherous step, and he landed safe and happy, amidst loud welcomes, on the amber bank beyond. The poor creatures seem to think that their friends need many things after death to which they have been used in life. Lonely graves may be often seen in the woods, or, perhaps, they only seem lonely from the others having sunk down, and in them, as in those which are gathered together in the common burial-places of the different reserves, beneath a little birch-bark roof raised over them, the surviving friends put, periodically, presents of rice, tobacco, and other Indian delights. It used to be the habit in all parts of Canada, as I have been told it still is in the distant places of the Continent, to gather all the dead of a nation together, from time to time, and bury them in a common grave. Twelve years were allowed to pass, and then the old men and the notables of the different divisions of the tribe assembled and decided when they would hold "the feast," for so they called it, so as to please each section and the allied tribes as well. This fixed, as all the corpses had to be brought to the village where the common grave had been dug, each family made arrangements respecting its dead, with a care and affection which were very touching. If they had parents dead in any part of the country, they spared no pains to

bring their bodies; they lifted them from their graves, and bore them on their shoulders, covered with their best robes. On a given day the people of each village went to their own cemetery, where the persons who had charge of it — for there were parties appointed to this office — raised the bodies in presence of the survivors, who renewed the grief they exhibited on the day of their first burial. All the corpses were ranged side by side, and, being uncovered, were exposed thus for a considerable time, that all around might see what they would themselves some day become. You may think what a sight this must have been; some of the bodies mere skeletons, some like mummies, and others mere shapeless corruption. Those which were not reduced to skeletons were, after a little, stripped of their flesh and skin, which, with the robes in which they had been buried, were burned. The bodies which were still uncorrupted were merely wrapped in skins, but the bones, when thoroughly cleaned, were put in sacks or in robes, and laid on their shoulders, and then covered with another skin outside. The perfect corpses were put on a kind of bier, and, with all the rest, were taken each to its own wigwam, where the several households held, each, a feast to its dead.

They have a curious idea respecting the soul, as the reason of this strange custom — at least those of them who, not being as yet Christians, still practise it. They think that the dead have two souls, dis-

tinct and material, but each endowed with reason. The one separates itself from the body at death, and hovers over the burial-place, till the Feast of the Dead, after which it is turned into a turtle-dove, or goes straight to the Land of Spirits. The other is, as it were, attached to the body, and still remains in the common grave, after the feast is over, never leaving it unless to enter the body of an infant, which the likeness of many of the living to those who have died seems to them a proof that they do.

When the feast is over, all the dead of each village are taken to a large wigwam, set apart for the purpose, and filled with poles and rods, from which the perfect bodies and the bags of bones are hung, along with countless gifts which the relatives present, in the name of the dead, to some of their living friends. This display of their riches accomplished, it remains only to take the ghastly loads to the common grave on the day appointed, which they do with frequent cries, which they say lighten the weight and secure the bearers from disease. At the central rendezvous, the same hanging of the corpses on poles, and the same display of presents, is again made, and, then amidst terrible cries and confusion, the whole are put into the general burial-pit, which is lined underneath with sable furs, to make the spirits happy in their homes in the other world. But they do not bury the presents with them, nor the outer skins in which they were wrap

ped; these they retain for themselves. In some tribes, in former times, a great mound or barrow heaped over the spot marked the resting-place of the multitude, in others the ground was simply levelled, and then, after rejoicings in their own wild way till they were tired, the living crowd dispersed, each party to its own village.*

A great change has come over the customs and feelings of many of the Indians, since missionaries went among them, and though in old settlements you often meet Pagans even yet, there are others who give the best proofs that they are true Christians. It is delightful to see them on the Sabbath, wending their way, calm, and in a right mind, to their lowly church, through the glades of the forest; and wild though the sound often is, I have listened to their singing the glorious praises of God with an interest which I hardly ever felt in any more civilized gathering. One of the hymns which have been made expressly for them, and of which they are especially fond, has always struck me as particularly touching, by its exact appreciation of an Indian's feelings, and its remarkably skilful adaptation to their broken English. I feel sure it has never appeared in print before, at least in Britain, as I got it from a missionary in Nova Scotia, who knew the author, himself a missionary, and told me it

* Nothing like this is done in Canada now, so far as I know, but in the "Relations des Jèsuites" it is spoken of as the general custom

existed only in manuscript, so far as he knew Here it is:

"THE INDIAN'S PRAYER.

"In de dark wood, no Indian nigh,
Den me look heb'n, and send up cry,
Upon my knee so low;
Dat God on high, in shiny place,
See me in night wid teary face,
My heart, him tell me so.

"Him send him angel, take me care,
Him come himself, and hearum prayer,
If Indian heart do pray.
Him see me now, him know me here,
Him say, 'Poor Indian, never fear,
Me wid you night and day.'

"So me lub God wid inside heart,
He fight for me, he takum part,
He sabe em life before.
God lub poor Indian in de wood,
And me lub He, and dat be good,
Me pray Him two time more.

"When me be old, me head be gray,
Den Him no leab me, so Him say,
'Me wid you till you die.'
Den take me up to shiny place,
See white man, red man, black man face
All happy 'like* on high."

One day, in the second summer we were on the

* *i. e.*, alike.

river, the clergyman asked me, in passing, if I would like to go up Lake Huron with him, on a missionary visit to a settlement of Indians, and of course I told him I should. It was soon settled when we should start, which we did in a little boat, two men going with us to take charge of it. We had oars with us, but the boat was too heavy for their easy use, and we trusted to a sail, the cord from which one of us held in his hand, to prevent any sudden gust from upsetting us. We were soon out on the glorious Lake Huron, which, like all the great lakes, cannot be distinguished from the sea by ordinary eyes; but we did not attempt to get out of sight of the coast, intending to run into it if any sudden storm should rise. As darkness set in, the sight overhead was beautiful beyond any thing, I think, I ever saw. The stars came out so large and bright, that it seemed as if you could see behind them into the depths beyond. They seemed to hang down like globes of light from the great canopy of the heavens. It was deliciously calm, the soft wind from behind, as it gently swelled the sail, serving to make the feeling of repose the more perfect. After sailing a day and a night, and the half of the next day, we at last reached the point where we were to land — a narrow tongue of sand, along which a stream, flowing through an opening in the sand-hills that line the coast, crept into the lake. It took us the rest of the afternoon to row as far as we wished, and

to get our supper of beef and some hard eggs, with a cup of tea, without milk, which we got ready at a fire on the beach. The water we had to use was our greatest trouble. It was nearly the color of ink, from the swamps through which it had flowed, and made our tea the reverse of pleasant in taste; but there was no choice, so that we made ourselves as contented as possible. Accommodation for the night was soon provided by stretching the sail over the mast, which was laid on two forked poles, a yard or so from the ground. This gave room for two; the other two were to sleep on the ground without this apology for a covering A huge fire, kindled close to us, served to keep off the mosquitoes, or rather was intended to do so Wrapping an old buffalo robe, or a quilt, round each of us, we were soon stretched out to try to get sleep; but its sweet delight kept far enough from us all. Oh! the horrors of that night. The mosquitoes, came down like the wolves on a fold, piercing through smoke and fire, and searching in the dark but too successfully for our noses, cheeks, and hands. The ants, too, were in myriads, and made their way up our boots to any height they thought proper. Once in, there was no getting these plagues out. We rose, went through every form of trouble to rid ourselves of them, but some still remained to torment us after each effort. Then the smoke itself was fit to make one wretched. It swept in, in clouds, as often as the

fire was stirred. At last, however, morning came, and, with its first dawn, we were up for the day; but what figures we presented! My worthy friend's nose seemed to have been turned upside down in the night, the mosquito-bites having made it much thicker near the eyes than at the bottom. It was irresistibly laughable to us all, except the unfortunate bearer, who was really unwell, partly through the mosquitoes, partly through the exposure. Luckily for our breakfast, a Potowattomie Indian — a short old man, in a shirt, leggings, and moccasins, and crowned with a tremendous hat — came in sight as we were busy preparing it with some more of the villanous water. He was soon amongst us, desiring to see what we were, and what we were doing, and, fortunately for us, the contents of the kettle attracted his attention. With unmistakable signs of disgust, he urged us to throw it out forthwith, and very kindly went to the side of the river, and, by scooping out the sand at the side, close to the stream, with his hands, obtained at once a little well of water clear as crystal, which we most gladly substituted for the liquid we had been using. Meanwhile, an animated negotiation was being carried on with our benefactor as to the terms he wished to make for guiding us to the Indian settlement — grunts and dumb show having to do the work of words. A few charges of powder and shot, at last, secured his services, and ere long, all being ready, we set out. Our route led

us directly inland, over the huge barrier of sand, with which the edge of Lake Huron, at that part, is guarded. From its top we looked, far and near, over the forest, which, close at hand, was very miserable and stunted, from the hinderance to any chance of drainage offered by the hill on which we stood. At a distance, however, it rose in all its unbroken and boundless grandeur — the very image of vastness and solitude. Descending the inner slope, we were soon making the best of our way across the brown water of successive swamps, with thin trees felled, one beyond another, as the only bridges. "Mind your feet there, George," cried my friend, as I was making my way, Blondin fashion, across one; but he had more need to mind his own, for the next minute he was up to the knees in water of the color of coffee. An hour's walking brought us to the settlement, which consisted of a number of wigwams, raised among very small clearings, a log-house at one part marking the interpreter's house — himself an Indian. A messenger having been sent round, we had before long a congregation in the chapel, which was a log-house, without seats, but with a desk at the one end, the other being appropriated, in great part, to the door, which was large enough to have served for the door of a barn. The squaws, in blankets, and blue cloth petticoats, and leggings, with large silver brooches on their bosoms, and bare heads, squatted down on the one side; the men, in all varieties of

costume, from a shirt upwards, took possession of the other; the door standing open during the whole service, so that we, at the upper end, looked out into the forest, which was close at hand. The dogs, of course, formed part of the audience, some of them lying in the open space of the middle, and others at the door. One, which was more troublesome than the others during the service, walked straight up the middle, and stood looking the clergyman in the face, to his no small annoyance, but was soon made to suffer for his want of respect. One of the men rose, silently as a shadow, and slipped up behind the four-legged hearer till he came close to his long tail; on this his hands closed in a moment, and then away went the poor brute, with a great swing, over his head, in a succession of summersaults to the door, out of which, when it reached the ground, it rushed with prolonged howls, and was seen no more while we were there. Not a countenance moved while this extraordinary ejectment was being effected, and the Indian himself resumed his place as solemnly as if he had been performing only an ordinary duty. It was very slow work to speak through the interpreter, but the Indians sat it out with patient fortitude, trying as it must have been to these wild creatures, so little prone to sedentary occupation, to listen to such a tedious process. A walk back, after all was over, brought us to our boat, which we had left on the beach, and in due time, after a

pleasant sail, we swept down the St. Clair once more, glad enough to get safely home again.

The perfect stolidity of the Indians under any amount of excitement is wonderful — unless, indeed, under the influence of whiskey, or excited by the pursuit of hunting — for, usually, you might as well expect to move the features of an image as theirs. When railroads were introduced into Canada, they were a source of wonder to every one who had not seen them, the Indians alone excepted. They did not even spare a grunt, but marched into the carriages with the same composure as if they had been familiar with them from their childhood. In any house they may enter, you can detect no sign of curiosity, still less of wonder, in any of their movements. The same cast-iron physiognomy is kept from the first to the last, whatever objects of interest you may have to show them.

It is very hard for us to realize how difficult it is to get a new idea into such minds. A minister of my acquaintance, who lived among the Indians, told me what great trouble he had to teach them the use of a mill. He had got them to grow some wheat, and to cut it down, by doing a large part of the work himself; and when the time came to turn it into flour, he had to help to put it into sacks, to help to get it into a canoe, to go with them to the mill, to show them how to give it to the miller, get back the flour, get it put into the sacks again, and then into the canoe, and paddle home. Every thing

nad to be acted before they would do it themselves.

As might be expected, they are superstitious in proportion to their ignorance. One day, an Indian came to Henry in great distress, telling him his gun was bewitched, and could not shoot straight, and asking him if he could make it right. Henry, of course, knew that the poor fellow was only laboring under a delusion, and at once told him he would make it all right. He, therefore, asked him to let him have it for the night, his wish being to have an opportunity of cleaning it thoroughly. Having made it all right, on the Indian's return he handed it to him, with all solemnity, telling him it was perfectly cured now. "Me shoot ten days —get nothing," said the unfortunate sportsman. "It's all right, now, though," replied Henry, assuring him, besides, that there were no more witches about it. Some time after, we were surprised by an Indian's coming to the house with the hind legs of a deer, telling us they were from the Indian for the "man cured gun." Henry was from home at the time, and as he had said nothing about his unbewitching the weapon, the gift was a mystery until his return. The gratitude shown for so small a favor was very touching, and impressed us all in the Indian's favor. He must have published Henry's wonderful powers, as well as rewarded them, for that same winter another Indian came to him in the woods, where he happened to be,

with the same story, that his rifle was bewitched, and would not shoot. With a good deal of sly humor, Henry determined to play the conjurer this time, as he had no chance of getting the weapon home. He therefore told the Indian to sit down, and then drew a circle round him and the infected rifle, and proceeded to walk mysteriously round him, uttering all the while any amount of gibberish he could think of, and making magic passes in all directions. After repeating this a number of times, he took the rifle into his hands, and proceeded to examine it carefully, and seeing that it was in perfect order, he announced the ceremony to be complete, and handed it back again, with the assurance that he was not to be afraid of it, that he had only to take a good aim, and that there were no witches about it now. The Indian grunted thanks, and made off; and Henry heard no more of it till, some months after, when he happened to be in a neighboring village, the subject of his charms, to his surprise, came up to him, and told him "he must be great doctor — Indian's gun shoot right ever since he cured it." Henry answered that it had needed no cure, and that he had only done what he did because the Indian would not have believed his rifle was right if he had not done something. What the effect was on the Indian's notions I know not, but we certainly heard no more of bewitched rifles.

CHAPTER XVII.

The humming-bird. — Story of a pet. — Canada a good country for poor men. — A bush story of misfortune. — Statute labor. — Tortoises. — The hay season. — Our wagon-driving. — Henry and I are nearly drowned. — Henry falls ill. — Backwoods doctors.

IT was in May of the second year I first noticed the humming-bird. There are different species in Canada in summer, but all seem equally beautiful. When I first saw one, it was like a living gem, darting hither and thither in the open round the house, never resting but for a few moments, while it poised itself on its lovely wings, which seemed motionless from the very rapidity of their vibration. No bird flies so fast, small though it be, so that it is impossible to follow it as it darts from spot to spot. Later in the season, a bunch of flowers, at an open window, was pretty sure to bring one quivering over them, preparatory to thrusting its long thin bill into the cups, to drink the sweets that lay at the bottom. Sometimes in the evenings, they might be seen, for half an hour at a time, darting at the little clouds of flies which dance in the air, under the branches of the trees, or in the open, — retiring to a twig to rest when

tired. They seem, for a great part of their time, to feed on such insects, the stomach of several humming-birds, I have heard, having been found full of them when opened. There is a charming account in a Philadelphia magazine of one which showed greater familiarity with man than has ever been known from any other of its species.* One of the young ladies of a family was sitting at an open window, when a humming-bird flew in, very feebly, and dropped on the floor, apparently exhausted. To pick it up was the work of a moment; and the thought that it might be tired and hungry, after a long flight, forthwith set its friend to try whether she could tempt it to eat any thing. Mixing some cream and sugar, and pouring a little of it into the cup of a bell-shaped flower, the beautiful creature, to her great delight, at once began to sip, and gathering strength as he did so, by and by flew off through the window once more. Next day, and every day thenceforth, through the summer, the little thing came back about the same time, for another repast, fluttering against the window, if it happened to be shut; and whenever he had not got enough, flying backwards and forwards close at hand, in great restlessness till a fresh supply had been manufactured. It did not matter who was in the room, the sight of the flower held out brought him in, when he was wait-

* Quoted in Gosse's "Canadian Naturalist."

ing for his meal; indeed, his natural timidity seemed to have been entirely laid aside. Late in the season, a day passed without his visit, and they found that, in all probability, he had flown off to the south for the winter. Whether he came back again the next spring has not been recorded.

Some of the settlers in the bush, back from the river, were striking examples of the benefits a poor man may get from coming to such a country as Canada. I used often to go back on various errands, and was always delighted with the rough plenty of farmers who, not many years ago, had been laborers at home, with only a few shillings a week for wages. Now, by steady labor and sobriety, many amongst them were proprietors of a hundred acres of excellent land, and sat down at each meal to a table which even well-to-do people in England are not in the habit of enjoying. But there were some cases of failure, which no less strongly brought the peculiar circumstances of the country before me. Ten miles away from us, and lying back from the river, a person who had been a baker in London, but had determined to turn farmer, had settled some years before. He built a log-house, and cleared a patch, but it was slow work, as he had to bring on his back all the flour and potatoes, or what his household needed, the whole way from the river, through the forest, over swamps, and every other difficulty that lay in his road. After a time he fell ill of fever and ague —

the great curse of new or low-lying districts in Canada and the States. For eight months he could do no work, and meanwhile his family were driven to the greatest straits to keep themselves alive. At last, he was able to get about once more. Every thing was behind with him, but he was still unbroken in spirit. But now came a new trial: a great tree, which had been left standing near his house, fell down across it, breaking in the roof, though fortunately without killing any one. The axe and patience offered the means of escaping from this misfortune also; and, before long, the tree was removed, and the shattered dwelling restored. For awhile all went on well enough after he had thus once more got on his feet. But his troubles were not yet at an end. Coming home one night with a heavy load, on his weary ten miles' road from the front, in crossing a swamp on a round log, his foot slipped, and a sharp stake ran through his boot deep into the flesh, impaling him, as it were, for a time. How he got home I know not, but of course he left his load behind him, and had to crawl to his house as best he could. This last calamity fairly crushed his hopes of success; and, on recovering, he abandoned his land, moved with his family to a town eighty miles off, and took service at his old trade, in which, after a time, he was able to recommence business on his own account.

When the roads got pretty dry in the summer

time, we were all summoned by the "pathmaster" of our neighborhood — a dignitary who is elected annually to superintend the repairs of the different roads — to do our statute labor. As money to pay a substitute was out of the question, we had, of course, ourselves to shoulder shovels, and turn out for the six days' work required of us. My three elder brothers, and a number of neighbors, were on the ground on the day appointed, but they were an hour or two later than they would have required any laborers they might have hired to have been, and they forthwith commenced their task. It was amusing to see how they managed to get through the time, what with smoking, discussing what was to be done, stopping to chat, sitting down to rest, and all the manœuvres of unwilling workers. A tree had to be cut up at one part and hauled together for burning off; a ditch dug from nowhere to nowhere, at some other point; a bridge to be repaired, at a third, by throwing a log or two across it, in the places from which broken ones had been drawn out; a mud hole filled up, at a fourth; and the corduroy road, over a swamp, made more passable, at a fifth, by throwing a large quantity of branches on it, and covering them deeply with earth, so as to get a smooth surface. "I guess I've done more for the Queen, nor she's done for me," said John Courtenay, as he sat down for the tenth time. "I'll take it easy now, the boss is up the road," the "boss" being the pathmaster, who had gone off to another

gang at some distance. You may be sure our engineering was very poorly done, but it was all we had to look to to keep the roads passable at all in the wet weather. The vacant lots, every here and there, were the greatest hinderance to any improvements worthy the name, nobody caring to repair the road through an absentee's land, though all suffered from its being neglected.

There were a number of tortoises in the ponds, in the woods, and by the roadside, and they used to give us a good deal of amusement. They were of all sizes, but generally not very large, and were really beautiful in the markings of their shells, when you had them close at hand. But to get near enough for this was the difficulty. They used to come out of the water, in the middle of the day, to sun themselves, or to sleep, on the dry logs which lay over it, and the great point was to try to keep them from plumping off in an instant, rather than making to the land. It was all but hopeless to try it, but we would not give it up. Sometimes we came upon them, away from the water a little, and then we had it all our own way with them. They move very awkwardly on the ground, and seem too stupid to do even as much as they might, but they must not be handled incautiously, for they give terrible snaps with their horny mouths, which are like the sides of a smith's vice for hardness and strength of hold. A poor Scotchman who came out one summer, found this out to his cost. He

had been coming down the road, and saw a large tortoise, or "mud-turtle," as the Canadians call them, apparently sound asleep at the edge of the creek. Of course, he thought he had come on a treasure, and determined to catch it if possible. Stealing, therefore, breathlessly, up to the spot, he made a grab at it before it suspected danger, and in a minute had it swinging over his shoulder by its foreleg. The leg was short, and the round shield that covered the creature was therefore close up to his head. He thought he would take it home, and show the good folks this wonder of the woods; perhaps he thought of taming it, or of making combs for his wife out of its back shell. At any rate, on he jogged quite proud of his acquisition. He would soon get over the five miles more he had to walk, and then what excitement there would be at the sight of such a creature. But, by this time, the turtle had recovered presence of mind enough to look round him, and accordingly poked his head out, and in doing so came invitingly close to his captor's ear, on which his two jaws closed in a moment. If ever a prisoner had his revenge he had it. The Scotchman might have pulled his ear off, in trying to get free, but nothing short of that seemed of any use. He could not let go the leg, for that would leave the whole weight of the turtle hanging from his ear, and he could not keep his arms up without getting cramps in them. But he had to try. In misery, with his wretched ear bent

down close to the shell, and his hands immovably raised to the same shoulder the whole way, he had to plod on, the whole distance, to his house, where his appearance created no small alarm as he came near. Nothing could even then be done to loosen the creature's hold; it was like a vice, — until at last they managed to relieve him, by getting the head far enough out to cut it off, after which the jaws were at last parted, and the sufferer allowed to tell his luckless adventure.

One of our neighbors used to shock our notions of propriety by eating the "turtles" he caught. "There are fish, there are flesh, and there are fowl on a turtle," he used to say in his bad English, in describing their charms, but the worthy Manksman got no one to join him in his appreciation of them. The Indians have a kind of religious veneration for them, and would not, on any account, do them any harm. I knew one who acted as interpreter at a missionary station, who used to say that the hardest trial he had had, after he became a Christian, was one day in summer, when, having pounced upon a tortoise, he took it on his back to carry it home, and was overtaken by a dreadful storm of thunder and lightning. He said that he could hardly get over the thought, that it was because he had offended the sacred creature, and this notion fairly made him perspire with terror; but he had the courage to resist his alarm, and after the sky had cleared, he lifted it once more on

his shoulder, and went home resolved never to yield to fear of such a kind again.

The hay in the neighborhood was mown about the end of June, and as our own supply was, as yet, far short of our requirements, we had to buy a quantity. To get it cheaper, we undertook to send our wagon to the field for it, and bring it home ourselves. Henry and I were detailed for this service, and started one morning with the oxen and the wagon, a frame of light poles having been laid on the ordinary box to enable us to pile up a sufficient load. I had to get inside, while Henry forked up the hay from the cocks on the ground, my part being to spread it about evenly. We got on famously till the load was well up in the frame, the oxen moving on from one cock to another, through the stumps, at Henry's commands, but without any special guidance. All at once, while they were going at the rate of about two miles an hour, the wheels on one side gradually rose, and before I could help myself, over went the whole frame, hay and all, on the top of Henry, who was walking at the side. The oxen had pulled the load over a hillock at the foot of a stump. I was sent clear of the avalanche, but Henry was thrown on his back, luckily with his head and shoulders free, but the rest of his body embedded in the mass. Neither of us was hurt, however, and we laughed heartily enough, after we had recovered our self-possession, the first act being to stop the oxen, who were

marching off with the four wheels, as solemnly as ever, and had no idea of coming to a halt without orders. Of course we had to clear the frame, get it set up again on the wagon, and fork up all the hay once more, but we took care of the oxen the second time, and met no more accidents.

Henry and I were very nearly drowned, shortly after this, in that great lumbering canoe of ours, by a very ridiculous act on our own parts, and an unforeseen roughening of the water. Some bricks were needed to rebuild the chimney, and they could not be had nearer than the opposite side of the river. Henry and I, therefore, set off in the forenoon to get them, and crossed easily enough. We went straight over, intending to paddle down the shore till we reached the place where the bricks were to be had, about two miles below. Having nothing to hurry us, and the day being uncommonly bright and beautiful, we made no attempt to be quick, but drew the canoe to the land, and sallied up the bank to get some ears of Indian corn which were growing close by, and offered great attractions to our hungry stomachs. At last, after loitering by the way for an hour or two, we reached our destination, bought the bricks, and paddled our canoe some distance up a stream to get near them, that we might the more easily get them on board; but ignorance is a bad teacher, even in so simple a matter as loading a canoe with bricks. We had no thought but how to pack

them all in at once, so that we should not have to come over again, and kept stowing them in all the way along the canoe, except at each end, where we reserved a small space for ourselves. When the whole had been shipped, we took our places — Henry at the bows, on his knees; I at the stern, on a seat made of a bit of the lid of a flour-barrel — each of us with his paddle. It was delightful to steer down the glassy creek, and when we turned into the river, and skirted up close to the banks, it seemed as if we were to get back as easily as we came, though Henry just then bade me look over the side, telling me that the canoe was only the length of a forefinger out of the water, and, sure enough, I found it was so; but we never thought it boded any danger. In smooth water one is not apt to think of the rough that may follow. We got along charmingly for a time, under the lee of the land, which made a bend out, some distance above our house, on the American side; we determined to allow a good deal for the current, and go to this point, before we turned to cross. Unfortunately for us, in our ignorance of the proper management of a canoe under difficulties, a great steamer, passing on to Chicago, swept up the stream, close to us, just as we were about to strike out for home, and the swell it raised made the water run along the edge of the canoe, as if it were looking over and wanted to get in. It lurched and twisted, got its head wrong, and all but filled, even

with this slight agitation. We had got over this trouble when we found, to our alarm, on getting out from the shelter of the land, that the wind was getting up, freshly enough to make the mid-stream quite rough. If we had known the extent of our danger we would have turned back and unloaded some of our cargo, but no such notion occurred to us. We therefore determined to make the best of our way across; but it was easier determined than done. The wind and the short chopping waves together very soon took the management of our frail bark out of our hands, twisting the canoe round and round, in spite of all our efforts. Every little while we would get into the trough of the stream, and the water would run along from the bow to the stern, shining over the few inches on which depended our hope and life; then, some would find its way in. The bricks got quite wet. The empty space in which I sat was filled to my ankles with water, and Henry shouted that it was the same at his end. "Paddle hard, George, for your life — paddle, paddle, and we may get over;" and paddle both of us did, at the very top of our strength. We must have been making way swiftly, but owing to the noise of the wind, and the confusion of mind we were in, for neither of us could swim a stroke, we could not find out whether we made any progress, and, to add to our bewilderment, round went the head of the canoe the wrong way, once and again, in spite of us. "Shall I

throw out the bricks, Henry?" I cried. "Yes, if you can;" but it was next to impossible to do it. I did, indeed, manage to toss two or three over, but I was helmsman, and my giving up my paddle left us helplessly whirling round. Henry had his back to the bricks, and of course could do nothing. He, therefore, kept paddling as hard as ever. Seizing my paddle, I joined my efforts to his, and, after a time, found, to my great joy, that the water was changing color — a sure sign that we were much nearer land than we had been a little while before. A few minutes more, and we saw the bottom, and knew we were safe; but not so the bricks. The canoe sank before reaching the bank, immersing us to the middle, and though we dragged it to the land, the bricks were in so bad a state, that, from our neglecting to take special pains with them, a great many mouldered into red earth.

This was my only dangerous adventure with our large coffin of a canoe, but many a hard pull I have had with it. Poor Henry gave me one tough day's work, much against his will. He had been working in the field, and, being very warm, had drunk a large quantity of water, which brought on very painful cramps of the stomach. There were none but our two selves and the girls at home, and the nearest place to procure medical advice was at the village where I had got the bricks, across the river. There was no time to be lost; Henry was alarmingly ill, so away I went with the canoe, pad-

dling as hard as I could, and got to my destination pretty quickly. But to get the "doctor" was the difficulty. I found "Major" Thompson, whom I knew by sight, standing in his shirt-sleeves at the door of the coffee-house he kept, and I asked him if he could tell me where I should find the medical man. "Good morning, doctor," said the "Major," in answer — I was no more a doctor than he a major, but the Americans are fond of assuming and bestowing titles — "I don't know, p'raps he's to home — jist ask Gin'ral Northrop, yonder, if he's seen him come out this morning?" The gentleman to whom I was thus directed proved to be the leader of the choir in the village chapel, and followed some trade, but what, I don't know. He was dressed in a great broad straw hat, blue shirt, linen trowsers, and boots, and was very busy loading a cart with furniture at a door up the street. He was very courteous when I got up to him. "I guess," said he, "you'll be all right; I calculate he's not about yet; just go down the street, and turn round that there fence corner, and you'll easy find his place." Thither I went, and was fortunate enough to find the old man, who, in spite of a dissipated and miserable look, seemed to know his profession. I could only suppose that he must have been driven to such a place from pure necessity. He gave me some stuff from a dispensary, as strange and uncouth as that of the apothecary in "Romeo and Juliet:" —

"About his shelves
A beggarly account of empty boxes,
Green earthen pots, bladders and musty seeds,
Remnants of packthread . . .
Were thinly scattered."

Into this sanctum I was taken by the back-door, and found it, in reality, more a lumber-room than a shop, for the window made no sort of display, and, everywhere, dirt reigned in undisturbed possession. Having got the medicine, I quickly regained the canoe, and paddled home as rapidly as possible. But, instead of getting better, poor Henry seemed rather to get worse, so that I had to set off a second time, with a long account of the symptoms, on paper, to hand to the doctor. This time, thank God, he hit on the right prescription, and I had the unspeakable pleasure of seeing the poor sufferer greatly relieved by an infusion we got made for him when I returned. I verily believe that if he had had no one to go over the river for him he must have died.

"The want of sufficient medical help, and too often the inferior quality of what you can get, is one of the greatest evils of living in the backwoods. Henry all but died a year or two after this, from the treatment he had to undergo at the hands of a self-styled doctor, who came to the neighborhood for a time, and left it when his incompetency was found out. The illness was a very serious one — brain fever — and the treatment resorted to was

bleeding and depletion, till life nearly ebbed away from sheer exhaustion. The poor fellow was made to take medicine enough almost to kill a strong man; and was so evidently sinking, that the other inmates of the house determined to send over for old Dr. Chamberlain, who had before saved him, when I went to him. "Killed with too much medicine," was all he said, when he had seen the wasted form of the patient, and heard the story; "if he should get through it, it will be in spite of what has been done, not by its means." He did get through, but it was a long, weary struggle. I have known a person come twenty miles in search of a medical man for his wife, and when he reached his house, be bitterly disappointed to find the doctor off ten miles in an opposite direction. Mr. Spring, up the river, had good cause to remember his being at the mercy of an uneducated practitioner. He was going in the dark, one winter night, to a friend's house, about two miles off, when suddenly slipping on a piece of ice, he fell violently on his knee. Trying to rise, he found he had injured the cap, so that he could not walk. He had, therefore, to crawl back home again, in the keen cold of a Canadian night, along the road, over the field, and down the steep bank, all covered thickly with snow. The "doctor," who lived five miles off, was, of course, sent for next morning as early as possible. But it would, perhaps, have been better if he had never been sent for at all, for

he bandaged the leg so tightly as almost to bring on mortification; and this he did, too, without attempting to bring the broken parts together. The result was a hopelessly stiff leg, after the sufferer had endured many weeks of pain.

We had occasional visits of gentlemen, who join ed the medical profession with other pursuits. They would cure a fever, or act as dentists, and announced their arrival by calls from house to house. A friend of mine, who had unfortunately lost a front tooth, thought he had better take advantage of such an opportunity, especially as he was going in a short time up Lake Huron to a public dinner. "But," said he, when relating the circumstance, "the fellow was a humbug; he put in a hickory peg to hold the new tooth, and when I was in the middle of my dinner it turned straight out, and stuck before me, like a tusk, till I got it tugged out."

There was a medical man of a very different stamp who came among us some years after this, when I had left the river, and of whom I have heard some curious stories. Dr. White — let that be his name — had been in large practice in Ireland, but had unfortunately fallen into dissipated habits, which compelled him to emigrate. To raise the means of reaching Canada, his wife had sold an annuity she enjoyed on her own life, after his engaging that he would give up his intemperate habits. He first settled in one of the towns, but afterwards

came to our part, and bought a farm, intending to help his income by working it. His old habit, however, to the regret of all, broke out again, and destroyed his prospects, in spite of his being looked up to, throughout the district, as the best "doctor" in it. People often came from a distance to consult him, and were doomed to find him helpless; and this, of course, speedily ruined his practice. Instances of his skill, however, still linger in the minds of many in the settlement, accompanied with great regret, that a man at once so clever and comely should have been so great an enemy to himself. He had a rough humor sometimes, when he was a little under the influence of drink, which was very diverting. Henry was one night at his house in the winter, when a rap came to the door. The others being busy, Henry rose to open it, and found two men, who had come through the frightful cold to get the doctor's assistance. The one, it appeared, could not speak, from some abscess or boil in his throat, which he had come to get lanced or otherwise treated. On being taken into the hall, which had a stove in it, and was comfortable enough, the doctor made his appearance, and walked up to the sufferer with a candle in his hand. "What's the matter with you?" The patient simply opened his mouth wide, and pointed into it with his fingers. "Let me see," said White. "Open your mouth, sir" — taking the candle out of the candlestick, and holding it close to the poor fellow's face. The

mouth was, of course, instantly opened as widely as possible, and the blazing candle was as instantly sent dash into it, as far as it would go, raising a yell from the patient that might have been heard over the next farm, which was followed by a rush outside the door to clear his mouth, as he seemed half choked. "Bring a light here," cried White, coming to the door quite coolly. "How do you feel, sir?" The blow with the soft candle, the fright, and the yell, all together, had wrought a miracle on the poor fellow. His trouble was clean gone. "I'm better, sir — what's to pay?" "Nothing at all," replied White; "good night to you," and the scene was over. Henry laughed, as he well might, at such an incident; and after awhile ventured to ask the doctor if there were no instruments that would have done? "Certainly there are, but do you think I'd dirty my instruments on a fellow like that? the candle would do well enough." Poor White died some time after, through intemperance. His widow and family were enabled to get back to Ireland by the sale of all the effects he had; and on their arrival, his friends took charge of the children, and the widow went out as a governess to India.

CHAPTER XVIII.

American men and women. — Fireflies. — Profusion of insect life. — Grasshoppers. — Frederick and David leave Canada. — Soap-making. — Home-made candles. — Recipe for washing quickly — Writing letters. — The parson for driver.

AS the delicious nights of summer drew on again, it was a pleasure of which we never wearied to ride over to some neighbor's to spend an hour or two. The visit itself was always delightful, for we could not have wished better society, but the unspeakable loveliness of the road was no less so. We very soon got a couple of horses, every one else having them, for no one in Canada ever thinks of walking if he can help it. I have often wondered at this, for the same persons who would not stir a step. if possible, in Canada, without a horse, or some conveyance, would have been fond of walking if they had remained in Britain. It cannot be because they have horses in the one country and had none in the other, for, in towns, there is no such liking for walking, though there are few who either own or can borrow a horse or vehicle, and those in the country who have neither will send in all directions to ask the loan of a neighbor's horse rather than

walk a few miles. Probably the great heat of summer renders the exertion of walking irksome to most people; and, on the other hand, in winter, the cold and the snow are such hinderances as to throw them out of the habit of it. There seems no doubt besides, that the effects of the climate on Europeans is to enfeeble them gradually, though they may not exhibit any symptoms of rapid decay, or suffer from any acute disease. The red cheeks of the inhabitants of Britain are very soon lost in Canada, and you very seldom see the stout, hearty people so common in England.

But I am forgetting my rides on the old mare, Kate, in the summer evenings. I was walking her slowly up the road one night, when I was struck by innumerable flashes of light among the trees in the forest at my side. I tried every theory I could think of to account for it, some of them ridiculous enough, but it was not till I came home that I hit on the right one, which I might have been sure of at first. The phenomenon in question was nothing but an immense number of fireflies sporting among the branches, and their motion made them seem as if every leaf were a Leyden jar giving off a succession of electric sparks. I had often seen them before, but never in such amazing swarms. They must have been holding some grand carnival, some firefly's ball, with endless dancing and wonderful illumination. The insects that make this brilliant display are a kind of beetle, about three-quarters of

an inch in length. They give out their light from different parts of their bodies, but chiefly from the lower half, and are often caught and kept for a time in bottles as a curiosity. In other countries they are said to have been put to various uses, but I never heard of their being so employed in Canada. The Caribs of St. Domingo, a race of Indians whose memory is now passing away, were formerly accustomed to use them as living lamps in their evening household occupations, just as we use candles. In travelling at night they fastened them to their feet, and in fishing or hunting in the dark they made them serve as lights to guide them. Moreover, as the fireflies destroy ants, they gave them the freest entry to their wigwams to help to rid them of these pests. Southey, in his poem of "Madoc," tells us, that it was by the light of this insect Coatel rescued the British hero from the hands of the Mexican priests:

> "She beckoned and descended, and drew out
> From underneath her vest a cage, or net
> It rather might be called, so fine the twigs
> That knit it — where, confined, two fireflies gave
> Their lustre. By that light did Madoc first
> Behold the features of his lovely guide."

I am afraid he would have remained ignorant of her loveliness, if the discovery had depended on the light of Canadian fireflies, which are very beautiful, indeed, in their momentary brightness, but are far

too dim for any thing more. I have often been reminded, as I have seen one, here and there, kindling his little spark for an instant, and sailing in light, for a brief glimpse, across the night, of the fine figure in which Coleridge compares the illumination afforded by philosophy, in the ages before Christ, to the radiance with which "the lanthorn-fly of the tropics" lights up, for a moment, the natural darkness. It is equally beautiful and apt.

It is wonderful to see what a profusion of insect life sometimes shows itself in the summer-time in Canada. I was once sailing down the Niagara River to Chippewa, which is the last port above the Falls, in the month of September, when, all at once, the steamer entered a dense snowy cloud of white gnats, so blinding, from the countless numbers, that all on deck had either to get below, or turn their backs, or stand behind some protection. You could see the land through them only as you would have seen it through a snow-storm, and this continued till we reached our destination — a distance of several miles. How many millions of millions of these frail creatures must there have been? There is another fly that I have also seen in vast numbers — the May-fly, which, however, makes its appearance not in May generally, but in June. But it is so disagreeable-looking, that my only desire on beholding it has been to get out of its way. Butterflies are sometimes met with in similar clouds. I have seen large numbers of them in

the air, or resting on the earth; but Sir James Emerson Tennent tells us, that in Ceylon, they sometimes fly past in flocks apparently miles in breadth, and in an unbroken stream, for hours and even days together.* What a vast amount of life there must be over the world, at any one time, when such an amazing fulness of it is met at even a single point! Canada has, indeed, too much cause to feel this, as regards the insect tribes, for, of late years, it has been visited by such a succession of pests as often to injure its harvests to a great extent. The "army-worm," as it is called, the weevil, the wireworm, the midge, and the locust, or, as the Canadians call it, the grasshopper, have each invaded districts, which, on their appearance, were rich with the promise of abundant crops, but were left waste and ruined when they had passed over it. The grasshopper is the most easily noticed of these plagues, as its size and its curious noise in flying, and the way it strikes against your clothes, and instantly fastens on them, are sure to draw attention. They seem to be a new arrival in Canada, having apparently travelled thither gradually from the vast prairies of the Far West. At the Red River they are met with in legions that enable one to realize what a curse the locusts must have been to the Egyptians of old. As soon as the dew is off the grass in the mornings they take short

* Sir J. E. Tennent's "Ceylon," i. 247.

flights, as if to prepare for the day's work, and about nine o'clock, rise in cloud after cloud and fly off. About noon the numbers seem greatest. The light is then palpably obscured — there is an unearthly ashen light over every thing — the air is filled as if with flakes of snow, sometimes to nearly a thousand feet in height, and changes from blue to silver-gray, or to ash or lead color, as the clouds grow deeper or diminish, a quivering motion filling it, as the light strikes on the myriads of moving wings. A sound, indescribable, but overpowering, from the thought of its source, comes down from the vast hosts, filling the mind with a sense of awe and amazement. Such flights have hitherto been seen and heard only outside the settled parts of Canada, but, in every part of it there are multitudes. I have seen them in countless thousands in the fields and on the roads, and have often caught them to look at the wonderful beauty of their limbs, which are finished far more elaborately than the finest ornament, and are suited to the habits and wants of the creature in the most admirable manner.

The summer of the second year saw a diminution of our family circle, by the departure of Frederick and David to the United States, to push their fortunes there. They did not like farming, and were attracted by the population and wealth of the States, as compared with Canada. It was a sad time with us who remained, when they left us. In

those days a great many young men left the province, from the difficulty of finding suitable employment in it. Where nearly all were farmers, and money was very scarce, and the towns mere villages, there was, of course, very little to do, and it was not to be wondered at that young men did not relish the thought of spending their lives as day-laborers on a piece of ground, with no better remuneration for hard work than the food they ate and the rough clothing they wore. Any thing more was not, in those days, to be hoped for. Since then, indeed, there has been a great change. The first race of settlers have made their farms valuable by many years' hard work and careful culture, and fine brick houses have taken the place of the shanties and log-houses which served at first. Some years of high prices made them all think their fortunes sure at once, and every one got his gig and his piano, and the girls went to boarding-schools, and the young men idled and flaunted round in fine clothes. If fewer leave Canada for the States now, it is not because they are any fonder than ever of hard work. Even where their father's farms would pay for hiring men to work them, they like to be gentlemen, and flock in crowds to turn doctors or lawyers in as easy a way as possible. It is wonderful how many there are of both these professions, and how many more hurry on to enter them. But there were no such openings in the early days of our settlement, and

my brothers must either have plodded on, driving oxen and hoeing, ploughing, harrowing, and the like, or have left for the great country across the river. They did not find life very sunny, however, even in the States, and both had hard struggles at first to get on. Poor Frederick, indeed, never got very far up in the world, a fever cutting him off some years after, when he was on a journey in the South. He died without a creature he knew near him, and indeed we did not know that he was gone till nearly a year after. David gradually made his way, and has long been comfortably settled in a rising town in one of the Western States; but his advancement rose from his having had the good fortune to buy some land where a town grew up shortly after, which enabled him to make a good deal of money. Our household, when they had left us, was very quiet compared with the past — only Robert, Henry, and I remaining, with my two sisters as the mistresses of the mansion.

What a curious Robinson-Crusoe life we led in many ways in those first years. A barrel raised on a stand, the bottom full of holes, and covered with a layer of straw, and a number of channels gouged out in the board on which it rested, formed the primitive machine for our soap-making. All the ashes from the fires were thrown into the barrel, and, when it was full, a quantity of water poured into it made the alkaline ley that was needed, a pail at the edge of the board below

catching it as it drained off. In summer time it was enough merely to throw this ley into another barrel, put in the fat left from our daily table, and stir the mixture together now and then, and the sun made soap of it, without any further trouble on our part. In colder weather it had to be put on the fire until the desired transmutation had been effected. The ley looked so very like strong tea, that I was often afraid of some accident, where any of it had been left in a cup or bowl. To drink it would have been certain and awful death, as we did not then know how to neutralize the effect if we had taken it. Noah Nash, a young lad in the neighborhood, was all but fatally poisoned by it one day; indeed, nothing saved him but his presence of mind, and the fact that he had an acid in the house. Chancing to come in very much heated, and seeing a cupful of nice strong-looking tea in the window, he swallowed nearly the whole of it before he had time to think that, instead of tea, it was the terrible alkali that had been drawn from the ashes. The serious consequences of his mistake flashed on him in an instant. Snatching a tumbler, he rushed to the cellar, where, providentially, there happened to be a barrel of vinegar, and in a moment filled the glass, and drank down successive draughts of it, and was thus saved, the acid effectually neutralizing the alkali in the stomach; but, quick as he had been, his mouth and throat were burned to such a degree by the potash,

that the skin of the mouth peeled away, day after day, in strips, and he had to be fed on the simplest preparations long afterwards. Our candles were a branch of home manufacture in which we rather excelled after a time, though, to tell the truth, the quantity used was not very great. We had bought candle-moulds of tin, and put aside any fat suitable for candles, till we had enough to make what would fill them; and then, what threading the wicks into the moulds at one end, and tying them over little pieces of wood at the other — what proud encomiums over one that kept fair in the middle — what a laugh at another which had in some eccentric way run down one side of the tallow, leaving the whole round of the candle undisturbed by any intrusion of the cotton. But we would not have made the fortune of any tallow-chandler had we had to buy all we burned, for we only lighted one at tea, or for a minute or two on going to bed, or to enable some one to read, when a craving for literary food set in. Lumps of pine, full of resin, were our more customary style of illumination, its flaming brightness, leaping and flaring though it was, sufficing for our ordinary requirements. We used to sit for hours round the fire, talking and dozing; to read was a huge effort, after hard work all day, and it was too cold, while the fire was kept up, to sit at any distance from it. In some houses I have known candles kept as sacredly for doing honor to a stranger as if they

had been made of silver. A rag in some grease, in a saucer, usually served for a lamp, and an inch or two of candle was only brought out when a guest was about to retire. Many a time I have known even visitors, in the rough bush, sent to bed in the dark. We were, however, in some things, wonderfully before the people settled back from the river. Most of them were content to put up with the very rudest accommodation and conveniences; one room, containing several beds, often holding not only a whole household, but any passing stranger. How to get out and in, unseen, was the great difficulty. I have often been in trouble about it myself, but it must surely have been worse for the young women of the family. As to any basin or ewer in the room, they were Capuan luxuries in the wild bush. "I'll thank you for a basin, Mrs. Smith," said I, one morning, anxious to make myself comfortable for the day, after having enjoyed her husband's hospitality overnight. It was gloriously bright outside, though the sun had not yet shown himself over the trees. "Come this way, Mr. Stanley; I'll give it you here," said Mrs. Smith. Out she went, and lifted a small round tin pie-dish, that would hold hardly a quart, poured some water into it from the pail at the door, which held the breakfast water as well, and set it on the top of a stump, close at hand, with the injunction to "make haste, for there was a hole in the bottom, and if I didn't be quick the water would all be gone."

Luckily, I was all ready; but there was no offer of soap, and so I had to make my hands fly hither and thither at a great rate, and finish as best I could by a hard rubbing with a canvas towel.

To write a letter in those days was by no means a light task. Ink was a rare commodity, and stood a great deal of water before it was done. When we had none, a piece of Indian-ink served pretty well; and when that was lost, we used to mix gunpowder and vinegar together, and make a kind of faintly-visible pigment out of the two. The only paper we could get was dreadful. How cruelly the pen used to dab through it! How invincibly shabby a letter looked on it! The post-office was in a store kept by a French Canadian, and was limited enough in its arrangements. I remember taking a letter one day a little later than was right, as it appeared. "The mail's made up, Mr. Stanley," said the post-master, "and it's against the law to open it when it's once sealed; but I suppose I may as well oblige a friend." So saying, he took down a piece of brown paper from the shelf behind him, cut round some seals which were on the back of it, and exposed the "mail;" which, forsooth, I found consisted of a single letter! Mine was presently laid peacefully at the side of this earlier sharer of postal honor, and I hope did not make the bundle too heavy for the mail-boy's saddle-bags.

It used to amuse us to see how readily every one round us took to new occupations, if any thing

hindered his continuing the one in which he had previously been engaged. You would hear of a tailor turning freshwater sailor, and buying a flat-bottomed scow, to take goods from one part of the river to another; one shoemaker turned miller, and another took to making and selling "lumber." A young lad, the son of a minister, who wished to get a good education, first hired himself out to chop cord-wood, and when he had made enough to buy books, and keep a reserve on hand, he engaged with a minister over the river, who had an "academy," to give him tuition, in return for having his horse cleaned, and the house-wood split. Working thus, he gained Latin and Greek enough to go to college; but had to return to his axe, and work for another winter, to get money to pay the expenses of the first session. This obtained, off he set, and ended by taking the degree of M.A. at Yale College, Connecticut. In the mean time, however, a change had passed over his mind as to becoming a clergyman; and instead of seeking a church, he went into partnership with his brother in the patent medicine trade, in which calling, I suppose, he is now engaged in one of the United States' cities.

I was once travelling on a winter night, in a public stage, on the edge of Lake Ontario. The vehicle was a high wagon, with a linen cover stretched over a round framework, like a gipsy tent. I was the only passenger, and had taken my place in the body of the machine. This did not suit the

driver, however, who seemed to feel lonely; and, after a time, turning round to me, said — "I guess we'd be better together this cold night. Come this way — wont you?" Of course, I instantly complied; and then received, among much various information on matters interesting to coach-drivers, a narrative of his own life, a portion of which I still remember:

"I'm a reg'lar preacher, you see," said he. "I was on the circuit round Framley for one turn, and they promised pretty fair, but I didn't get enough to keep house on. Then I got changed to Dover circuit, and that was worse. Says I to my wife — 'Wife,' says I, 'preachin' wont keep our pot bilin,' anyhow — I must scare up somethin' else, somehow.' So I heard that there was a new stage to be put on at Brownsville; and I went to Squire Brown, and told him that, if he liked, I'd drive it; and so, here I am — for, you see, the mail-stage has to go, even if a parson should have to drive it;" and he ended with a broad grin and a long laugh — ha — ha — ha!

CHAPTER XIX.

Americanisms. — Our poultry. — The wasps. — Their nests. — "Bob's" skill in killing them. — Raccoons. — A hunt. — Raccoon cake. — The town of Busaco. — Summer "sailing" — Boy drowned. — French settlers.

WE were struck, as every new comer is, by the new meanings put by Canadians on words, the new connections in which they used them, and the extraordinary way in which some were pronounced. Of course, we heard people "guessing" at every turn, and whatever any one intended doing, he spoke of as "fixing." You would hear a man say, that his wagon, or his chimney, or his gun, must be "fixed;" a girl would be ready to take a walk with you, as soon as she had "fixed herself;" and the baby was always "fixed" in the morning, when washed and dressed for the day. "Catherine," said a husband one day to his wife, in my hearing, pronouncing the last syllable of her name, so as to rhyme with line, "I calculate that them apples 'll want regulatin'," referring to some that were drying in the sun. They "reckon" at every third sentence. A well-informed man is said to be "well posted up" in some particular subject.

Instead of "what," they very commonly say "how," in asking questions. A pony was praised to me as being "as fat as mud." In place of our exclamations of surprise at the communication of any new fact, the listener will exclaim, "I want to know." Any log, or trunk of a tree, or other single piece of timber, is invariably a "stick," even if it be long enough for a mast. All the stock of a timber-yard is alike "lumber." An ewer is "a pitcher;" a tin-pail is "a kettle;" a servant is "a help;" an employer is "a boss;" a church pew is "a slip;" a platform at a meeting is "a stage;" children are "juveniles;" and a baby is "a babe." In pronouncing the word engine, or ride, or point, or any other word with vowels prominent in it, if you would imitate a Canadian, you would need to open your mouth very wide, and make as much of each sound as you can. Of course, I speak only of the country folks, native born; the town people, and the educated classes, generally speak as correctly as the same classes in England. We cannot help noticing, moreover, that all these corruptions are trifling compared with those which we find in the popular dialects of different parts of our own country. You can travel all through Canada and understand every thing you hear, except a word now and then; but at home, to pass from one shire to another is often like passing to a different people, so far as regards the language. The great amount of travelling now-a-days compared with the fixed life of our

forefathers, may serve to account for this. People of every nation meet in Canada, and all come to speak very nearly alike, because they move about so much; but the various races that settled in England or Scotland ages ago kept together closely, and consequently each learned to speak in a way of its own.

Our poultry increased very soon after our commencing on the river, until it became quite a flock; but we had a good deal of trouble with them. The weasels were very destructive to the chickens, and so were the hen-hawks, and chicken-hawks, which were always prowling round. But the hens managed to beat off the last of these enemies, and a terrible noise they made in doing so. The whole barn-yard population used to give Robert great annoyance, by flying over the fence he had put up round a piece of ground set apart as a garden; but he succeeded in terrifying them at last, by rushing out with a long whip whenever they made their appearance. The very sight of him was enough, after a time, to send them off with outstretched wings and necks, and the most amazing screeches and cackling; it was laughable to see their consternation and precipitate flight. Our turkeys were a nuisance as well as a comfort to us: they were much given to wandering, and so stupid withal, that if they once got into the woods we rarely saw them again. The only plan was to have their wings cut close, and to keep them shut up in the barn-

yard. In compensation for this trouble, however, we took ample revenge both on them and the cocks and hens, alike in person and in the harvest of eggs, which formed a main element in most of our dishes. We needed all we could get. As to eggs, it seemed as if any quantity would have been consumed. There was to be a "bee" one time, to raise a second barn; and my sisters were in great concern becaus they could not find out where the hens were laying. At last, they saw one go down a hole in the barn floor, and instantly concluded they had discovered the secret hoard. A plank was forthwith lifted, and there, sure enough, were no less than twenty dozen of eggs lying in one part or another. It was hard work to get them out, but Henry and I helped, and we brought them all to the house. In a week or ten days there were not two-dozen left. The men who had attended the "bee," and one or two whom we kept on at wages, had devoured them all in cakes and puddings, or in the ordinary way. But what would these bush-fellows not get down? One day, we had a laborer with us, and Eliza, to please him, set out a large glass dish of preserves, holding, certainly, a pound weight at the least. She thought, of course, he would take a little to his bread; but his notions on the subject were very different, for, drawing the dish to him, and taking up a tablespoon, he supped down the whole in a succession of huge mouthfuls. I have known a hired man eat a dozen of eggs at his breakfast!

The wasps were very numerous round the house in summer. A nest of these creatures ensconced themselves in a hole between two logs, in the front part of it, and, as they never trouble us, we did not trouble them. But not so our little terrier, Bob. The mouth of the nest was about a yard from the ground, and admitted only one at a time. Below this, Bob would take his seat for hours together, watching each arrival; sometimes letting them go in peaceably, but every now and then jumping up at them, with his lips drawn back, and giving a snap which seldom failed to kill them. The little fellow seemed to have quite a passion for wasp-hunting. The dead proofs of his success would often lie thick over the ground by evening. How the colony ever bore up against his attacks I cannot imagine. One day we saw John Robinson, a laborer, whom we had engaged, rushing down in hot haste from the top of the field, flinging his arms about in every direction, and making the most extraordinary bobbing and fighting, apparently at nothing. But, as he got near, he roared out, "I've tumbled a wasp's-nest, and they're after me," and this was all we could get out of him for some time. Indeed they followed him quite a distance. He had been lifting a log that was imbedded in the ground, when, behold! out rushed a whole townful, sending him off at once in ignominious flight. I used to think the nests of the wasps, which we sometimes found hanging from branches in the

woods, most wonderful specimens of insect manufacture. They were oval in form, with the mouth at the bottom, and looked often not unlike a clumsily made boy's top. But of what material do you think they were constructed? Of paper — real true paper, of a greyish color, made by the wasps gnawing off very small pieces of decayed wood, which they bruise and work up till it changes its character, and becomes as much paper as any we can make ourselves. It is wonderful that men should not have found out, from such a lesson, the art of making this most precious production much sooner than they did.

The raccoons, usually called 'coons, were a great nuisance when the corn was getting ripe. They came out of the woods at night, and did a great deal of mischief in a very short time. We used to hunt them by torchlight, the torches being strips of hickory bark, or lumps of fat pine. We could have done nothing, however, without the help of our dogs, who tracked them to the trees in which they had taken refuge, and then we shot them by the help of the lights, amidst prodigious excitement and commotion. It was very dangerous to catch hold of one of them if it fell wounded. They could twist their heads so far round, and their skin was so loose, that you were never sure you would not get a bite in whatever way you held them. The Weirs, close to us, got skins enough one autumn to make fine robes for their sleigh. I

never knew but one man who had eaten raccoon, and he was no wiser than he needed to be. He was a farm-laborer, who stammered in his speech, and lived all alone, and was deplorably ignorant. Meeting him one day after a hunt, in which he had got a large raccoon for his share, he stopped me to speak of it thus — 'Gre-e-at rac-c-coon that — there was a p-pint of oil in him — it m-made a-a m-most beautiful shortcake!" I wished him joy of his taste.

I remember one raccoon hunt which formed a subject of conversation for long after. Mr. Weir's field of Indian corn had been sadly injured, and our own was not much better, so we resolved on destroying some of the marauders if possible. All the young fellows for miles up and down the river, gathered in the afternoon, to get a long talk beforehand, and to make every preparation. Some of us saw to the torches — that there were plenty of them, and that they were of the right kind of wood; others looked to the guns, to have them properly cleaned, and the ammunition ready. "I say, Ned Thompson," said one, "I hope you wont be making such a noise as you did last time, frightening the very dogs." But the speaker was only told, in return, to keep out of the way of everybody else, and not run the risk of being taken for a 'coon himself as he went creeping along. In due time all work was over for the night on our farm, the dogs collected, a hearty supper enjoyed, amidst the

boasts of some and the jokes of others, and off we set. The moon was very young, but it hung in the clear heavens like a silver bow. A short walk brought us to the forest, and here we spread ourselves, so as to take a larger sweep, intending that the two wings should gradually draw round and make part of a circle. We could see the crescent of the moon, every now and then, through the fretted roof of branches, but it would have been very dark on the surface of the ground had not the torches lent us their brightness. As it was, many a stumble checked our steps. It was rough work — over logs, into wet spots, round trees, through brush, with countless stubs and pieces of wood to keep you in mind that you must lift your feet well, like the Indians, if you did not wish to be tripped up. The light gleaming through the great trees on the wild picture of men and dogs, now glaring in the red flame of the torches, now hidden by the smoke, was very exciting. The dogs had not, as yet, scented any thing, but they gradually got ahead of us. Presently we heard the first baying and barking. We forthwith made for the spot, creeping up as silently as possible, while the dogs kept the distracted raccoon from making its escape. How to get a glimpse of it was the trouble. "There's nothing there that I can see," whispered Brown to me; but the dogs showed that they thought differently, by the way they tore and scratched at the bottom of the tree. What with

the leaves, the feebleness of the moonlight, and our distance from the object, every eye was strained, for a time, without seeing a sign of any thing living. At last, Henry motioned that he saw it, and sure enough there it was, its shape visible far up on a branch. Another moment and the sharp crack of his rifle heralded its death and descent to the ground. We had good success after this first lucky shot, which had been only one of many fired at what seemed to be the raccoon, but had been only a knot in the tree, or, perhaps, a shadow. We did not come home till late, when, with dogs almost as tired as ourselves, the whole party re-assembled, each bearing off his spoils with him if he had won any.

I was walking up the road one afternoon with my brother, when we came to an opening on the right hand, apparently only leading into pathless woods. Stopping me, however, Henry turned and asked, "If I saw yon post stuck up in the little open?" It was some time before I could make it out. At last I noticed what he alluded to — simply a rough post, six feet high, stuck into the ground, in the middle of unbroken desolation. "That's the centre of the market-place in the town of Busaco, that is to be," said he. "All this ground is surveyed for a city, and is laid out in building lots, — not in farms." I could not help laughing. There was not a sign of human habitation in sight, and the post must have been there for years.

When it will be a town it is very hard to conjecture. It stands on the outside of a swampy belt, which must have deterred any one from settling in it, and towns don't go *before* agricultural improvement, but follow it, in such a country as Canada, or, indeed, anywhere, except in a merely manufacturing district, or at some point on a busy line of travel. Some time after, a poor man effected one great step towards its settlement, by a very unintentional improvement. He had a little money, and thought that if he dug a deep, broad ditch, from the swamp to the river, he could get enough water to drive a mill, which he intended to build close to the bank. But it turned out, after the ditch was dug, and his money gone, that the water, which he thought came into the swamp from springs, was nothing but rain, that had lodged in the low places, and had been kept there by the roots of trees and the want of drainage. For a time, the stream was beautiful, but, after a little, the swamp got better, and the stream diminished, until, in a few weeks, the channel was dry, and the swamp became good land. I hope the poor fellow had bought it before commencing his ditch. If so, he would make money after all, as his improvement raised its value immensely.

A number of the young men of the humbler class along the river, used to go away each summer "sailing" — that is, they hired as sailors on the American vessels, which traded in whole fleets

between the eastern and western towns on the great lakes. It was a very good thing for them that they could earn money so easily, but the employment was not always free from danger. One lad, whom I knew very well — William Forth, the son of a decent Scotch tailor — was lost in it in the autumn of our second year. He had sailed for Lake Superior, and did not return at the time expected. Then his friends began to be anxious, especially when they heard the news of a great storm in the north-west. He was never heard of again, and no doubt perished with all the crew, his vessel having foundered in the gale. Years after, it was reported that a schooner, sailing along the upper coast of Lake Huron, came upon the wreck of a small ship, down in the clear waters, and found means of hooking up enough to show that it was the one in which our poor neighbor's son had been engaged. Curiously and sadly enough, a second son of the same parents met a miserable death some years after. He was attending a threshing-mill, driven by horses, and had for his part to thrust in the straw to "feed it;" but he, unfortunately, thrust it in too far, and was himself drawn in, and crushed between the innumerable teeth by which the grain is pressed out. Before the machine could be stopped, poor James was cut almost to pieces. Thus even the peaceful St. Clair had its share in the trials that follow man under all skies.

Occasionally, accidents and calamities of this kind would happen close to us, and I could not but be struck at the depth of feeling to which they gave rise amidst a thin population. The tenant on the only let farm in the neighborhood, who lived a mile from us, lost a beautiful boy in a most distressing way. There was a wood wharf close to his house, from the end of which the lad used to bathe on fine summer evenings. A number of them were amusing themselves thus, one afternoon, when Mrs. Gilbert, the wife of the person of whom I speak, coming out from her work, chanced to look at them, and saw one who was diving and swimming, as she thought, very strangely. A little after, they brought her the news that her boy was drowned, and it turned out that it had been his struggles at which she had been looking with such unconcern. The poor woman took to her bed for weeks directly she found it out, and seemed broken-hearted ever after.

The number of French in our neighborhood, and the names of the towns and places on the map, all along the western lakes and rivers, often struck me. Beginning with Nova Scotia, we trace them the whole way — proofs of the sway France once had in North America. The bays and headlands, from the Atlantic to the Far West, bear French names. For instance, Cape Breton, and its capital, Louisburg, and Maine, and Vermont, in the States. All Lower Canada was French; then we

have Detroit on Lake St. Clair; Sault Ste. Marie at Lake Superior; besides a string of old French names all down the Mississippi, at the mouth of which was the whilom French province of Louisiana, on the Gulf of Mexico. This shows significantly the great vicissitudes that occur in the story of a nation. But our own history has taught us the same lesson. All the United States were once British provinces.

I had come out early one morning, in spring, to look at the glorious river which lay for miles like a mirror before me, when my attention was attracted to a canoe with a great green bush at one end of it, floating, apparently empty, down the current. I soon noticed a hand, close at the side, slowly sculling it by a paddle, and keeping the bush down the stream. As it glided past, I watched it narrowly. A great flock of wild ducks were splashing and diving at some distance below; but so slowly and silently did the canoe drift on, that they did not seem to heed it. All at once, a puff of smoke from the bush, and the sound of a gun, with the fall of a number of ducks, killed and wounded, on the water, plainly showed what it meant. An Indian instantly rose up in the canoe, and paddled with all haste to the spot to pick up the game. It was a capital plan to cheat the poor birds, and get near enough to kill a good number. There were immense flocks of waterfowl, after the ice broke up, each year; but they were so shy that we were

very little the better for them. It was very different in earlier days, before population increased, and incessant alarm and pursuit had made them wild, for the whole province must once have been a great sporting ground. There is a marsh on Lake Ontario, not far from Hamilton, called Coote's Paradise, from the delight which an officer of that name found in the myriads of ducks, etc., which thronged it thirty or forty years ago.

CHAPTER XX.

Apple-bees. — Orchards. — Gorgeous display of apple-blossom. — A meeting in the woods. — The ague. — Wild parsnips. — Man lost in the woods.

WE had a great deal of fun when our orchard got up a little, and when we were able to trade with our neighbors for fruit, in what they used to call "apple-paring bees." The young folks of both sexes were invited for a given evening in the autumn, and came duly provided with apple-parers, which are ingenious contrivances, by which an apple, stuck on two prongs at one end, is pared by a few turns of the handle at the other. It is astonishing to see how quickly it is done. Nor is the paring all. The little machine makes a final thrust through the heart of the apple, and takes out the core, so as to leave nothing to do but to cut what remains in pieces. The object of all this paring is to get apples enough dried for tarts during winter, the pieces when cut being threaded in long strings, and hung up till they shrivel and get a leather-like look. When wanted for use, a little boiling makes them swell to their original size again, and bring back their softness. You may

imagine how plentiful the fruit must be to make such a liberal use of it possible, as that which you see all through Canada. You can hardly go into any house in the bush, however poor, without having a large bowl of "apple sass" set before you — that is, of apple boiled in maple sugar. The young folks make a grand night of it when the "bee" comes off. The laughing and frolic is unbounded; some are busy with their sweethearts; some, of a grosser mind, are no less busy with the apples, devouring a large proportion of what they pare; and the whole proceedings, in many cases, wind up with a dance on the barn-floor.

While speaking of orchards and fruit, I am reminded of the district along the River Thames, near Lake St. Clair. To ride through it in June, when the apple-blossom was out, was a sight as beautiful as it was new to my old country eyes. A great rolling sea of white and red flowers rose and fell with the undulations of the landscape, the green lost in the universal blossoming. So exhaustless, indeed, did it seem, even to the farmers themselves, that you could not enter one of their houses without seeing quantities of it stuck into jugs and bowls of all sorts, as huge bouquets, like ordinary flowers, or as if, instead of the blossom of splendid apples, it had been only hawthorn. Canadian apples are indeed excellent — that is, the good kinds. You see thousand of bushels small and miserable enough, but they are used only for pigs, or for throwing by

the cartload into cider-presses. The eating and cooking apples would make any one's mouth water to look at them — so large, so round, so finely tinted. As to flavor, there can surely be nothing better. Families in towns buy them by the barrel: in the country, even a ploughman thinks no more of eating them than if they were only transformed potatoes. Sweet cider, in its season, is a very common drink in many parts. You meet it at the railway-stations, and on little stands at the side of the street, and are offered it in private houses. Canada is indeed a great country for many kinds of fruit. I have already spoken of the peaches and grapes: the plums, damsons, melons, pears, and cherries, are equally good, and equally plentiful. Poor Hodge, who, in England, lived on a few shillings a week, and only heard of the fine things in orchards, feasts like a lord, when he emigrates, on all their choicest productions.

They were wonderful people round us for their open-air meetings — very zealous and very noisy. I was on a visit at some distance in the summer-time, and came on a gathering in the woods. There were no ministers present, but some laymen conducted the services. All round, were wagons with the horses unyoked, and turned round to feed from the vehicles themselves, as mangers. Some of the intending hearers sat on the prostrate logs that lay here and there, others stood, and some remained in their conveyances. There was no prep-

aration of benches, or convenience of any kind. It so happened that I came only at the close. The proceedings were over, and there was nothing going on, for some time, but a little conversation among the leaders. In one wagon I noticed a whole litter of pigs, and found, on asking how they came to be there, that they belonged to a good woman who had no one with whom to leave them at home, and had brought them with her, that she might attend to their wants, and enjoy the meetings, at the same time. There were often open-air assemblies in the woods. Temperance societies, with bands of music, drew great crowds. Rough boards were provided for seats, and a rough platform did for the speeches. All the country side, old and young, went to them, for most of the people in the country districts are rigid teetotallers. There are poor drunkards enough, after all, but it is a wonder there are no more, when whiskey is only a shilling or eighteenpence a gallon.

The great plague of the river was the ague, which seized on a very large number. The poisonous vapors that rise from the undrained soil, in which a great depth of vegetable matter lies rotting, must be the cause, for when a district gets settled, and opened to the sun, so that the surface is dried, it disappears. I never had it myself, I am happy to say, but all my brothers suffered from its attacks, and poor Eliza shivered with it for months together. It is really a dreadful disease. It begins with a burning fever,

occasioning a thirst which cannot be satisfied by drinking any quantity of water, and when this passes off, every bone shakes, the teeth rattle, the whole frame quivers, with the most agonizing cold. All the bedclothes in the house are found to be insufficient to keep the sufferer warm. After a day's misery like this, the attack ceases, and does not return till the second day. Its weakening effects are terrible. If severe, the patient can do nothing even in the interval of the attacks, and they sometimes continue for seven and eight months together. The only real remedy known is quinine, and it is taken in quantities that astonish a stranger. Of late years there have been far less of the disease in the older districts than formerly, and it is to be hoped that, some day, it will disappear altogether, but meanwhile it is a dreadful evil. It used to be a common English disease, but it is now nearly unknown in most parts of our country. Oliver Cromwell died of it, and in Lincoln it was one of the most prevalent maladies. I remember meeting an old Englishwoman who firmly believed in the old recipe for its cure, of a spider steeped in a glass of wine and swallowed with it. That was the way, she said, it had been cured in her part, and nothing could be better!

A terrible misfortune befel a worthy man residing back from the river, one spring, through his son — a growing boy — eating some wild parsnips in ignorance of their being poisonous. The poor little

fellow lingered for a time, and at last died in agony. This must be reckoned among the risks families run in the bush. I have known a number of cases of a similar kind.

One day we were startled by a man crying to us from the road that two children of a settler, a few miles back, were lost in the woods, and that all the neighbors were out, searching for them. We lost no time in hurrying to the place, and found that the news was only too true. The two little creatures — a sister and brother — had wandered into the woods to pull the early anemones, which come out with the wild leeks, by the sides of creeks and wet places, at the beginning of spring, and they had gradually run to one flower after another, till they were fairly lost. The excitement was terrible. Men and women alike left every thing, to search for them. The forest was filled with the sound of their names, which voice after voice called out, in hopes of catching an answer. Night came, and all the searchers returned unsuccessful, but there were others who kindled lights, and spent the darkness in their kind efforts. But it was of no use. Two — three — four — five — six days passed, and the lost ones were still in the great silent woods. At last, on the seventh day, they came on them, but almost too late. The two were lying on the ground — the little girl dead, the boy far gone. Tender nursing, however, brought him round, and he was able to tell, after a while, that they had wandered

hither and thither, as long as they could, eating the wild leeks, bitter and burning as they are, until the two could go no further. He did not know that his sister was dead till they told him. It was touching to see his father and mother swayed by the opposite feelings of grief for the dead, and joy for the living.

Another time, in the winter, on a piercingly cold night, we were roused from our seats round the fire, by the cries of some one at a distance. Going to the door, we found it was an unfortunate fellow who had got bewildered by the snow covering the wagon tracks in a path through the bush, and who was trying to make himself heard, before the neighbors went to bed. It was lucky for him we had not done so, for our hours were very early indeed. It was so cold that we could only stand a few minutes at the door by turns, but we answered his cries, and had the satisfaction of finding that he was getting nearer and nearer the open. At last, after about half an hour, he reached the high road, and was safe. But the fellow actually had not politeness to come up next day, or any time after, to say he was obliged by our saving his life.

A poor woman, not far from us, had lost her husband in the forest, many years before, under circumstances of peculiar trial. She was then newly married, and a stranger in the country, and he had gone out to chop wood at some distance from their house, but had been unable to find his

back. His wife and neighbors searched long and earnestly for him, but their utmost efforts failed to find him. Months passed on, and not a word was heard of him, until, at last, after more than a year, some persons came upon a human skeleton, many miles from the place, lying in the woods, with an axe at its side, the clothes on which showed that it was the long-lost man. He had wandered further and further from his home, living on whatever he could get in the woods, till death, at last, ended his sorrows.

I shall never forget the story of a man who had been lost for many days, but had, at last, luckily wandered near some human habitations, and had escaped. He was a timber-squarer — that is, he squared the great trees which were intended for exportation, the squaring making them lie closely together, and thus effecting a saving in freight, and had been employed on the Georgian Bay, amongst the huge pine forests from which so many of those wonderful masts, so much prized, are brought. His cabin was at a good distance from his work, which lay now at one point, and now at another. Fortunately it was fine mild autumn weather, else he would have paid his life for his misadventure. On the morning of the unfortunate day, he had set out at a very early hour, leaving his wife and family in the expectation that he would return at night or within a few days at most. For a great wonder a fog chanced to be lying on the ground, hiding

every thing at a few yard's distance, but he took it for granted that he knew the road, and never thought of any danger. On, therefore, he walked for some time, expecting, every moment, to come on some indication of his approach to his place of work. At last, the fog rose, and, to his surprise, showed that he had walked till nearly noon, and was in a spot totally unknown to him. Every tree around seemed the counterpart of its neighbor, the flowers and fern were on all sides the same; nothing offered any distinguishing marks by which to help him to decide where he was. The path along which he had walked was a simple trail, the mere beaten footsteps of wood men or Indians, passing occasionally, and to add to his perplexity, every here and there other trails crossed it, at different angles, with nothing to distinguish the one from the other.

It was not for some hours more, however, that he began to feel alarmed. He took it for granted he had gone too far, or had turned a little to one side, and that he had only to go back, to come to the place he wished to reach. Back, accordingly, he forthwith turned, resting only to eat his dinner which he had brought with him from home. But, to his utter dismay, he saw the sun getting lower and lower, without any sign of his nearing his "limit." Gray shades began to stretch through the trees; the silence around became more oppressive as they increased; the long white moss on the trees, as he

passed a swamp, looked the very image of desolation; and, at last, he felt convinced that he was lost. As evening closed, every living thing around him seemed happy but he. Like the castaway on the ocean, who sees the sea-birds skimming the hollows of the waves or toppling over their crests, joyful, as if they felt at home, he noticed the squirrels disappearing in their holes; the crows flying lazily to their roosts; all the creatures of the day betaking themselves to their rest. There was no moon that night, and if there had been, he was too tired to walk further by its light. He could do no more than remain where he was till the morning came again. Sitting down, with his back against a great tree, he thought of every thing by turns. Turning round, he prayed on his bended knees, then sat down again in his awful loneliness. Phosphoric lights gleamed from the decayed trees on the ground; myriads of insects filled the air, and the hooting of owls, and the sweep of night-hawks and bats, served to fill his mind with gloomy fears, but ever and anon, his mind reverted to happier thoughts, and to a growing feeling of confidence that he should regain his way on the morrow.

With the first light he was on his feet once more, after offering a prayer to his Maker, asking his help in this terrible trial. He had ceased to conjecture where he was, and had lost even the aid of a vague track. Nevertheless, if he could only push on, he thought he must surely make his escape before long.

The sun had a great sweep to make, and he was young and strong. Faster and faster he pressed forward as the hours passed, the agony of his mind driving him on the more hurriedly as his hopes grew fainter. Fatigue, anxiety, and hunger were meanwhile growing more and more unbearable. His nerves seemed fairly unstrung, and as he threw himself on the ground to spend a second night in the wilderness, the shadow of death seemed to lower over him. Frantic at his awful position, he tore his hair, and beat his breast, and wept like a child. He might, he knew, be near home, but he might, on the other hand, be far distant from it. He had walked fifty miles he was sure, and where in this interminable wilderness had he reached? His only food through the day had been some wild fruits and berries, which were very scarce, and so acrid that they pained his gums as he ate them. He had passed no stream, but had found water in holes of fallen trees. What he suffered that night no one can realize who has not been in some similar extremity. He had no weapon but his axe, and hence, even if he came upon deer and other creatures, he could not kill them — there seemed no way to get out of the horrible labyrinth in which he was now shut up. From the morning of the third day his mind, he assured me, became so bewildered that he could recollect very little of what then took place. How he lived he could hardly say — it must have been on frogs, and

snakes, and grass, and weeds, as well as berries, for there were too few of this last to keep him alive. Once he was fortunate enough to come on a tortoise, which he could not resist the temptation to kill, though he knew that if he followed it quietly it would guide him to some stream, and thus afford nim the means of escape. Its raw flesh gave him two great meals. His clothes were in tatters, his face begrimed, his hair and beard matted, his eyes hot and bloodshot, and his strength was failing fast. On the tenth day he thought he could go no further, but must lie down and die. But deliverance was now at hand. As he lay, half unconscious, from weakness of body and nervous exhaustion, he fancied he heard the drip of oars. In an instant every faculty was revived. His ear seemed to gather unnatural quickness; he could have heard the faintest sound at a great distance. Mustering all his strength, he rose, and with the utmost haste made for the direction from which the cheering sound proceeded. Down some slopes — up opposite banks — and there at last the broad water lay before him. He could not rest with the mere vision of hope, so on he rushed through the thick brush, over the fretting of fallen timber and the brown carpet of leaves, till he reached the river-bank, which was sloping at the point where he emerged, a tongue of land jutting out into the water, clear of trees. To the end of this, with anxiety indescribable, he ran, and kneeled in the

attitude of prayer at once to God for his merciful deliverance, and to man, when the boat should come, whose approach he now heard more clearly from afar, — that he might be taken to some human dwelling. The boat did come — his feeble cry reached it, and in a moment, when they saw his thin arms waving for help as he kneeled before them, the bows were turned to the shore, and he was taken on board — the lost was found! He fainted as soon as he was rescued, and such was his state of exhaustion, that at first it seemed almost impossible to revive him. But by the care of his wife, to whom he was restored as soon as possible, he gradually gathered strength, and when I saw him some years after was hearty and vigorous. The place where he was found was full thirty miles from his own house, and he must have wandered altogether at least a hundred and fifty miles — probably in a series of circles round nearly the same points.

CHAPTER XXI.

A tornado. — Bats. — Deserted lots. — American inquisitiveness. — An election agent.

I HAVE already spoken of the belt of trees running back some miles from us, familiarly called "The Windfall," from their having been thrown down by a hurricane many years before. Some years after, when living for a time in another part of the province, I had a vivid illustration of what these terrible storms really are. It was a fine day, and I was jogging along quietly on my horse. It was in the height of summer, and every thing around was in all the glory of the season. The tall mints, with their bright flowers, the lofty Aaron's rod, the beautiful Virginia creeper, the wild convolvulus, and wild roses, covered the roadsides, and ran, as far as the light permitted them, into the openings of the forest. The country was a long roll of gentle undulations, with clear streamlets every here and there in the hollows. The woods themselves presented a perpetual picture of beauty as I rode along. High above, rose the great oaks, and elms, and beeches, and maples, with their tall

trunks free of branches till they stretched far overhead; while round their feet, not too thickly, but in such abundance as made the scene perfect, waved young trees of all these kinds, intermixed with silver birches and sumachs. My horse had stopped of his own accord to drink at one of the brooks that brawled under the rude bridges across the road, when, happening to look up, I noticed a strange appearance in the sky, which I had not observed before. A thick haze was descending on the earth, like the darkness that precedes a storm. Yet there was no other sign of any approaching convulsion of nature. There was a profound hush and gloom, but what it might forbode did not as yet appear. I was not, however, left long in ignorance. Scarcely had my horse taken its last draught and forded across the brook, than a low murmuring sound in the air, coming from a distance, and unlike any thing I had ever heard before, arrested my attention. A yellow spot in the haze towards the south-west likewise attracted my notice. The next moment the tops of the taller trees began to swing in the wind, which presently increased in force, and the light branches and twigs began to break off. I was glad I happened to be at an open spot, out of reach of immediate danger, the edges of the brook being cleared for some distance on both sides. Two minutes more, and the storm burst on the forest in all its violence. Huge trees swayed to and fro under its rude shock

like the masts of ships on a tempestuous sea ; they rubbed and creaked like a ship's timbers when she rolls, and the sky grew darker and darker, as if obscured by a total eclipse of the sun. It was evident that the fury of the storm would not sweep through the open where I stood, but would spend itself on the woods before me. Meanwhile, as I looked, the huge oaks and maples bent before the tornado, the air was thick with their huge limbs, twisted off in a moment, and the trees themselves were falling in hundreds beneath the irresistible power of the storm. I noticed that they always fell with their heads in the direction of the hurricane, as if they had been wrenched round and flung behind it as it passed. Some went down bodily, others broke across, all yielded and sank in ruin and confusion. The air got blacker and blacker — a cloud of branches and limbs of trees filled the whole breadth of the tempest, some of them flung by it, every now and then, high up in the air, or dashed with amazing violence to the ground. A few minutes more, and it swept on to make similar havoc in other parts. But it was long before the air was clear of the wreck of the forest. The smaller branches seemed to float in it as if upheld by some current that was sucked on by the hurricane, though unfelt on the surface of the ground. In a surprisingly short time a belt of the woods, about an eighth of a mile in breadth, and running I cannot tell how far back, was one vast chaos,

through which no human efforts could find a way. The same night, as we afterwards learned, the tornado had struck points incredibly distant, taking a vast sweep across Lake Ontario, ravaging a part of New York, and finally rushing away to the north in the neighborhood of Quebec.

The destruction it caused was not limited to its ravages in the forest; farmhouses, barns, orchards, and fences, were swept away like chaff. I passed one orchard in which every tree had been dragged up and blown away; the fences for miles, in the path of the storm, were carried into the air like straws, never to be found again; the water in a mill-pond by the roadside was lifted fairly out of it, and the bottom left bare. At one place a barn and stables had been wrenched into fragments, the contents scattered to the winds, and the very horses lifted into the air, and carried some distance. Sawmills were stripped of their whole stock of "lumber," every plank being swept up into the vortex, and strewn no one knew whither. There were incidents as curious as extraordinary in the events of the day. A sheep was found on one farm, uninjured, beneath a huge iron kettle, which had been carried off and capsized over the poor animal, as if in sport. Wherever the storm passed through, the forest was, from that moment, a tangled desolation, left to itself, except by the beasts that might choose a safe covert in its recesses. Thenceforth, the briars and bushes would have it for their own, and

grow undisturbed. No human footstep would ever turn towards it till all the standing forest around had been cut down.

The bats were very plentiful in summer, and used often to fly into the house, to the great terror of my sister Margaret, who used to be as afraid of a bat as Buffon was of a squirrel. They were no larger than our English bats, and undistinguishable from them to an ordinary eye. Almost as often as we went out on the fine warm evenings, we were attracted by their flying hither and thither below the branches of the trees, or out in the open ground, beating the air with great rapidity with their wonderful membranous wings. A bird peculiar to America used to divide attention with them in the twilight — the famous "whip-poor-will," one of the family of the goatsuckers; of which, in England, the night-jar is a well-known example. It is amazing how distinctly the curious sounds, from which it takes its name, are given; they are repeated incessantly, and create no little amusement when they come from a number of birds at once. The flight of the whip-poor-will is very rapid, and they double, and twist, and turn in a surprising way. Their food is the large moths and insects, any of which, I should think, they could swallow, for it is true in their case at least, that their "mouth is from ear to ear." The gape is enormous, reaching even behind the eye; and woe betide any unfortunate moths or chaffers that may

cross their path. It sees perfectly by night, but is purblind by day, its huge eyes showing, the moment you see it, that, like that of the owls, it is for service in partial darkness. The light completely confuses it, so that, until sunset, it is never seen, unless when one comes by accident upon its resting-place, where it sits sleeping on some log or low branch, from which it will only fly a very short distance if disturbed, alighting again as soon as possible, and dozing off forthwith. They used to come in June, and enliven the evenings till September, when they left us again for the south. Some people used to think it fine sport to shoot birds so swift of flight; but, somehow, I could never bring myself to touch creatures that spoke my own language, however imperfectly.

Immediately behind our lot was one which often struck me as very desolate-looking when I had to go to it to bring home the cows at night. A field had been cleared, and a house built, but both field and house were deserted: long swamp grass grew thick in the hollows; nettles, and roses, and bushes of all kinds, climbed up, outside and in; the roof was gone, and only the four walls were left. I never learned more than the name of the person who had expended so much labor on the place, and then abandoned it. But there were other spots just like it all over the bush; spots where settlers had begun with high hopes; had worked hard for a time, until they lost heart, or had been stopped by some

insurmountable obstacle, and had deserted the home they had once been so proud of. One case I knew was caused by a touching incident of bush-life. A young, hearty man, had gone out in the morning to chop at his clearing, but had not returned at dinner, and was found by his wife, when she went to look for him, lying on his back, dead, with a tree he had felled resting on his breast. It had slipped back, perhaps, off the stump in falling, and had crushed him beneath it. What agony such an accident in such circumstances must have caused the sufferer! The poor fellow's wife could do nothing even towards extricating her husband's body, but had to leave it there till the neighbors came, and chopped the tree in two, so that it could be got away. No wonder she "sold out," and left the scene of so great a calamity.

Every one has heard of the inquisitiveness of both Scotchmen and Americans. I allude more particularly to those of the humbler rank. I have often laughed at the examples we met within our intercourse, not only with these races, but with the less polished of others, also, in Canada. I was going down to Detroit on the little steamer which used to run between the town and Lake Huron — a steamer so small that it was currently reported among the boys, that one very stout lady in the township had made it lurch when she went on board — and had gone on the upper deck to look round. The little American village on the oppo-

site side was "called at," and left, in a very few minutes, and we were off again past the low shores of the river. A little pug-nosed man, in a white hat and white linen jacket, was the only one up beside me; and it was not in his nature, evidently, that we should be long without talking. "Fine captain on this here boat?" said he. I agreed with him off hand; that is, I took it for granted he was so. "Yes, he's the likeliest captain I've seen since I left Ohio. How plain you see whar the boat run — look! Well, we're leaving County-seat right straight, I guess. Whar you born?" "Where do you think?" I answered. "Either Ireland or Scotland, anyhow." "No. *You're* Irish, at any rate, I suppose?" — I struck in. "No, sir — no, sirree — I'm Yankee born, and bred in Yankee town, and my parents afore me. you travelling altogether?" I asked him what he meant, for I really didn't understand this question. "Why, travelling for a living — what do you sell?" On my telling him he was wrong for once, he seemed a little confounded; but presently recovered, and drew a bottle out of his breast-pocket, adding, as he did so — "Will you take some bitters?" I thanked him, and said, I was "temperance." "You don't drink none, then? Well, I do;" on which he suited the action to the word, putting the bottle back in its place again, after duly wiping his lips on his cuff. But his questions were not done yet. "Whar you

live?" I told him. "Married man?" I said I had not the happiness of being so. "How long since you came from England?"—I answered. "You remember when you came?" I said I hoped I did, else my faculty must be failing. "I guess you were pretty long on the waters?" But I was getting tired of his impudence, and so gave him a laconic answer, and dived into the cabin out of his way.

I was very much amused at a rencontre between the "captain," who seemed a really respectable man, and another of the passengers, who, it appeared, had come on board without having money to pay his fare. The offender was dressed in an unbleached linen blouse, with "dandy" trowsers, wide across the body, and tapering to the feet, with worn straps of the same material; old boots of a fashionable make, an open waistcoat, and an immensity of dirty-white shirt-breast; a straw hat, with a long green and lilac ribbon round it. A cigar in his mouth, a mock ring on his finger, and a very bloodshot eye, completed the picture. It seemed he was a subordinate electioneering agent, sent round to make stump speeches for his party, and, generally, to influence votes; and the trouble with the captain evidently rose from his wishing to have his fare charged to the committee who sent him out, rather than pay it himself. The captain certainly gave him no quarter. "He's a low, drunken watchmaker," said he, turning to me; "I saw him last night

spouting away for General Cass on the steps of the church at Huron. The fellow wants to get off without paying—I suppose we'll have to let him." And he did. He got through to the journey's end.

CHAPTER XXII.

A journey to Niagara. — River St. Clair. — Detroit. — A slave's escape. — An American Steamer. — Description of the Falls of Niagara. — Fearful catastrophe.

THE country on the St. Clair, though beautiful from the presence of the river, was, in itself, flat and tame enough. All Canada West, indeed, is remarkably level. The ridge of limestone hills which runs across from the State of New York at Niagara, and stretches to the north, is the only elevation greater than the round swells, which, in some parts, make the landscape look like a succession of broad black waves. The borders of the St. Clair itself were higher than the land immediately behind them, so that a belt of swamp ran parallel with the stream, rich reaches of black soil rising behind it through township after township. The list of natural sights in such a part was not great, though the charms of the few there were, were unfading. There was the river itself, and there was the vast leafy ocean of tree-tops, with the great aisles with innumerable pillars stretching away underneath like some vast cathedral of nature; but these were common to all the country. The one

wonder of the land was at a distance. It was Niagara. How we longed to see it! But it was some years before any of us could, and there was no opportunity of going together. I had to set out by myself. It was in the month of September, just before the leaves began to turn. The weather was glorious — not too warm, and as bright as in Italy. I started in the little steamer for Detroit, passing the Indian settlement at Walpole Island, the broad flats covered with coarse grass, toward the entrance of Lake St. Clair, and at last, threading the lake itself, through the channel marked out across its shallow and muddy breadth, by long lines of poles, like telegraphs on each side of a street. Detroit was the London of all the folks on the river. They bought every thing they wanted there, it being easy of access, and its size offering a larger choice than could be obtained elsewhere. It is a great and growing place; though, in the lifetime of a person still living — General Cass — it was only the little French village which it had been for a hundred years before. Taking the steamer to Buffalo, which started in an hour or two after I got to Detroit, I was once more on my way as the afternoon was drawing to a close. We were to call at various British ports, so that I had a chance of seeing different parts of the province that I had not yet visited. The first step in our voyage was to cross to Sandwich, the village on the Canadian shore, opposite Detroit, from which it is less than a

mile distant. I was glad to see a spot so sacred to liberty — for Sandwich is the great point which the fugitive slaves, from every part of the Union, eagerly attempt to reach. I felt proud of my country at the thought that it was no vain boast, but a glorious truth, that slaves could not breathe in England, nor on British soil; that the first touch of it by the foot of the bondsman broke his fetters and made him free forever. I was so full of the thought, that when we were once more under weigh it naturally became the subject of conversation with an intelligent fellow-traveller, who had come on board at Sandwich. "I was standing at my door," said he, "a week or two ago, when I saw a skiff with a man in it, rowing, in hot haste, to our side. How the oars flashed — how his back bent to them — how he pulled! It was soon evident what was his object. As he came near, I saw he was a negro. Though no one was pursuing, he could not take it easy, and, at last, with a great bend, he swept up to the bank, pulled up the skiff, and ran up to the road, leaping, throwing up his hat in the air, shouting, singing, laughing — in short, fairly beside himself with excitement. 'I'm free! I'm free! — no more slave!' was the burden of his loud rejoicing, and it was long before he calmed down enough for any one to ask him his story. He had come all the way up the Mississippi from Arkansas, travelling by night, lying in the woods by day, living on corn pulled from the fields, or on

poultry he could catch round farm-houses or negro quarters; sometimes eating them raw, lest the smoke of his fire should discover him. At last he reached Illinois, a free State, after long weeks of travel; but here his worst troubles began. Not being able to give a very clear account of himself, they put him in jail as a 'fugitive.' But he gave a wrong name instead of his own, and a wrong State instead of that from which he had come. He told them, in fact, he had come from Maryland, which was at the very opposite side of the Union from Arkansas, and was kept in jail for a whole year, while they were advertising him, to try to get some owner to claim him, and they let him off only when none appeared in the whole twelve months. This ordeal passed, he gradually made his way to Detroit, and now, after running such a terrible gauntlet, he had risen from a mere chattel to be a man!" Seeing the interest I took in the incident, he went on to tell me others equally exciting. One which I remember, was the rescue of a slave from some officers who had discovered him in one of the frontier towns of the States, and were taking him, bound like a sheep, to Buffalo, to carry him off to his master in the South. Indignant at such treatment of a fellow-man, a young Englishman, who has since been a member of the Canadian Parliament, and was then on the boat with him, determined, if possible, to cheat the men-stealers of their prey. Breaking his design to the colored cook, and through him getting the secret

aid of all the other colored men on the boat, he waited till they reached Buffalo, some of the confederates having previously told the poor slaves the scheme that was afoot. As the boat got alongside the wharf, seizing a moment when his guards had left him, the gallant young fellow effectually severed the rope that bound the slave, and, telling him to follow him instantly, dashed over the gangway to the wharf, and leaped into a skiff which was lying at hand, with oars in it ready, the negro following at his heels in a moment; then, pushing off, he struck out into the lake, and reached Canada safely with his living triumph. The story made a thrill run through me. It was a brave deed daringly done. The risk was great, but the object was noble, and he must have had a fine spirit who braved the one to accomplish the other.

The steamer itself was very different from those with which I had been familiar in England. Instead of cabins entirely below the deck, the body of the ship was reserved for a dining-room, surrounded by berths, and one portion of it covered in for cargo; the ladies' cabin was raised on the back part of the main deck, with a walk all round it; then came an open space with sofas, which was like a hall or lobby for receiving passengers or letting them out. Next to this, at the sides, was a long set of offices, facing the engine-room in the centre, and reaching beyond the paddle-boxes, both the side and central structures being continued for some

distance, to make places for the cook's galley, for a bar for selling spirits and cigars, for a barber's shop, and for I know not what other conveniences. Covering in all these, an upper deck stretched the whole length of the ship, and on this rose the great cabin, a long room, provided with sofas, mirrors, carpets, a piano, and every detail of a huge drawing-room, — innumerable doors at each side opening into sleeping places for the gentlemen travellers. It was a fine sight, with its profusion of gilding and white paint on the walls and ceiling, its paintings on panels at regular intervals all round, its showy furniture, and its company of both sexes. You could get on the top even of this cabin, if you liked, or, if you thought you were high enough, might go out on the open space at each end, where seats in abundance awaited occupants. The whole structure, seen from the wharf when it stopped at any place, was more like a floating house than a ship, and seemed very strange to me at first, with its two stories above the deck, and its innumerable doors and windows, and its dazzling white color from stem to stern. Such vessels may do well enough for calm weather or for rivers, but they are far from safe in a storm at any distance from land. The wind catches them so fiercely on their great high works that they are like to capsize, when a low-built ship would be in no danger. Indeed, we had a proof of this on coming out of Buffalo to cross to Chippewa; for as the wind had blown during the

night while we were ashore, we found, when we started again next morning, that the shallow water of that part of the lake was pretty rough, and our way leading us almost into the trough of the waves, the boat swayed so much to each side alternately, that the captain got all the passengers gathered in a body, and made them run from the low to the high side by turns, to keep it from swamping. The water was actually coming in on the main deck at every roll. It was very disagreeable to have such a tumbling about, but this ugly state of things did not last long. The smooth water of the Niagara was soon reached, and we were gliding down to within about three miles or so of the Falls, as quietly and carelessly as if no such awful gulf were so near. I could not help thinking how terrible it would have been had any accident injured our machinery in such a position. There certainly were no sails on the boat, and I greatly question if there was an anchor, the short distance of her trips making one generally unnecessary. At last we got safely into Chippewa Creek, and all chance of danger had passed away.

Long before reaching this haven of refuge, a white mist, steadily rising, and disappearing high in the air, had marked with unmistakable certainty our near approach to the grand spectacle I had come to see. Never for a moment still, it had risen and sunk, grown broader and lighter, melted into one great cloud, or broken into waves of white

vapor, from the time I had first seen it, and had made me restless till I was safely on shore. The sensation was painful — a kind of instinct of danger, and an uneasiness till it was past. Having nothing to detain me, I determined to lose no time in getting to the Falls themselves; and therefore, leaving my portmanteau to be sent on after me, I set out for them on foot. There is a beautiful broad road to the spot, and it was in excellent order, as the fall rains had not yet commenced, so that I jogged on merrily, and was soon at my journey's end at Drummondville, the village near the Falls, on the Canadian side, where I resolved to stay for some days. One of the finest views of the great wonder burst upon my sight during this walk. On a sudden, at a turn of the road, an opening in the trees showed me the Falls from behind, in the very bend downwards to the gulf beneath. The awful gliding of the vast mass of waters into an abyss which, from that position, only showed its presence without revealing its depth, filled me with indescribable awe. Over the edge, whither, I as yet knew not, were descending, in unbroken volume, millions of tons of water. Above, rose the ever-changing clouds of vapor, like the smoke from a vast altar, and behind, looking up the river, were the struggling waves of the rapids, covering the whole breadth of the stream with bars of restless white. After seeing Niagara from every other point of view, I think this is one of the finest. The leap

into the hidden depths has in it something awfu beyond any power of description.

You may be sure I did full justice to the opportunities my visit afforded me, and kept afoot, day after day, with praiseworthy diligence. My first walk to the Falls, from the village, brought me, through a break in a sandy bank, to a spot from which nothing could be seen at the bottom of a gorge but the white foam of the American Fall. The trees filled each side of the descent, arching overhead, and made the vista even more beautiful than the wild outline of the bank itself would have been; the water, like sparkling snow, drifting in long tongues down the face of the hidden rocks, filling up the whole view beyond. It depended on the position of the sun whether the picture were one of dazzling white or more or less dulled; but at all times the falling water, broken into spray, and partially blown back as it descended, by the force of the air, was one of surpassing beauty. The American Fall, though nine hundred feet wide, has only a small part of the current passing over it, and it is this shallowness that makes it break into foam at the moment of its descent. Emerging on the road at the edge of the river, the great Horse-shoe was at once before me on my right hand. No wonder the Indians called it "Ni-wa-gay-rah" — the "Thunder of Waters." A mass of a hundred millions of tons of water, falling a depth of a hundred and fifty feet in the course of a single hour,

while you stand by, may well give such a sound as overwhelms the listener's sense of hearing. It is no use attempting to picture the scene. It was some time before I could go near the edge, but at last, when my head was less dizzy, I went out on the projecting point called the Table Rock, which has, however, long since fallen into the abyss, and there, on a mere ledge, from which all beneath had been eaten away by the spray, I could let the spectacle gradually fill my mind. You cannot see Niagara at once; it takes day after day to realize its vastness. I was astonished at the slow unbroken fall of the water. So vast is the quantity hanging in the air at any one moment, that it moves down in a great green sheet, with a slow, awful descent. The patches of white formed in spots here and there showed how majestically it goes down to the abyss. Think of such a launching of a great river, two thousand feet in breadth, over a sudden precipice — the smooth flow above — the green crest — the massy solidity of the descent — and then the impenetrable clouds of watery spray that hide the bottom. Yet at the edge it was so shallow that one might have waded some steps into it without apparent danger. Indeed, I noticed men one day damming it back some feet, in a vain attempt to get out the body of a poor man who had leaped over. They hoped it would be found jammed among the rocks at the bottom, within reach, if this side water were forced back. But if it ever

had been, it was since washed away, and no efforts could recover it. Descending a spiral staircase close to the Table Rock, I had another view from below; and what words can convey the impression of the deep, trembling boom of the waters, as you caught it thus confined in the abyss? It was terrible to look into the cauldron, smoking, heaving, foaming, rushing, as far as the eye could see through the mist. A slope of fragments from the side of the rock offered a slippery path up to the thick curtain of the Falls, and you could even go behind it if you chose. But I had not nerve enough to do so, though several parties ventured in, after having put on oilskin clothes; guides, who live in part by the occupation, leading them on their way. Overhead, Table Rock reached far out, awaiting its fall, which I felt sure could not be long delayed. In crossing it I noticed a broad crack, which each successive year would, of course, deepen. On every ledge, up to the top of the precipice, grass and flowers, nourished by the incessant spray, relieved the bareness, and in the middle of the river, dividing the Horse-shoe Fall from the American, the trees on Goat Island dimly showed themselves through the ascending smoke. The vast sweep of waters bending round the Horse-shoe for more than the third of a mile, was hemmed in at the further side by masses of rock, the lower end of Goat Island projecting roughly from the torrents at each side, so as to hide part of the more distant

one from my sight. A hill of fragments from its face lay heaped up in the centre, and more thinly scattered at the further side. But I could pay little attention to details, with the huge cauldron within a few yards of me, into which the great green walls of water were being every moment precipitated, and which, broken into sheets of foam, hissed, and lashed, and raged, and boiled, in wild uproar, as far as my eye could reach. The contrast between the solemn calmness of the great sheet of green ever gliding down in the centre, with the curtain of snowy wreaths at its edges, where the stream above, from its shallowness, broke into white crystalline rain in the moment of its first descent, and the tossing, smoking storm beneath, was overpowering, and — accompanied as it ever was with the stunning, deafening noise of three thousand six hundred millions of cubic feet of water falling in an hour, from so great a height — filled my mind with a sense of the awful majesty and power of God such as I scarcely remember to have felt elsewhere.

Being anxious to cross to the American side, I walked down the side of the river, after having ascended to the top of the bank, and, at last, about a mile below, found a road running down slowly to the level of the water, the slope having brought me back to within a comparatively short distance of the Fall. It would have been impossible to have reached this point by keeping along below, the

broken heaps of rock making the way impracticable. The river at the place I had now gained is, however, so wonderfully calm, that a ferry-boat plies between the British and American shores, and by this I crossed. Some ladies who were in it seemed, at first, in some measure alarmed by the heaving of the water, but as the surface was unbroken, and reflection showed that it must be safe, they soon resigned themselves to the charms of the view around. Forthwith, the boat was in the centre of a vast semicircle of descending floods, more than three thousand feet in their sweep, and on the edge of the foaming sheets of the unfathomable gulf, into which they were thundering down. The grand cliffs on each side, the brown rocks of Goat Island in the midst, the fringe of huge trees in the distance on every hand, the clouds of spray which rose in thick smoke from the tormented waters — the whole pierced and lighted up by the rays of a glorious sun, made a scene of surpassing beauty. I could not, however, take my eyes for more than a moment from the overwhelming grandeur of the main feature in the picture. Still, down, in their awful, dense, stupendous floods, came the waters, gathered from the inland seas of a continent, pouring as if another deluge were about to overwhelm all things. But, high over them, in the ever-rising clouds of vapor, stretched a great rainbow, as if to remind us of the solemn pledge given of old, and the very edges of the mist glittered, as each

beat of the oar sent us on, with a succession of prismatic colors, the broken fragments of others which shone for a moment and then passed away.

The ascent at the American side was accomplished by a contrivance which I think must be almost unique. A strong wooden railroad has been laid, at a most perilous slope, from the bottom to the top of the cliff, and a conveyance which is simply three huge wooden steps, on wheels, furnishes the means of ascent, a wheel at the top driven by water, twisting it up, by a cable passed round a windlass. I could not help shuddering at the consequence of any accident that might occur, from so precarious an arrangment. Goat Island is one of the great attractions on this farther side, and is reached by a bridge which makes one half forget the wildness of the gulf across which it is stretched. There is a house on the island in which I found refreshments and Indian curiosities for sale, but as I was more interested in the Falls for the moment than in any thing else, I pushed on by a path which turned to the right and led straight to them. A small island on the very edge of the precipice, and connected by a frail bridge with Goat Island, lay on my road. It was the scene of a very affecting accident in 1849. A gentleman from Buffalo had visited it along with his family, and a young man of the name of Addington, and after looking over it, the party were about to leave the spot, when Addington, in his thoughtless spirits, suddenly took up

one of the little children, a girl, in his arms, and held her over the edge of the bank, telling her that he was going to throw her in. The poor child, terrified, unfortunately made a twist, and rolled out of his hands into the stream. Poor Addington, in a moment, with a loud cry of horror, sprang in to save her, but both, almost before the others at their side knew that any thing of so fearful a kind had happened, were swept into the abyss beneath. Beyond Goat Island, a singularly daring structure has enabled visitors to cross to some scattered masses of rock on the very brink of the great fall. A tower has been erected on them, and a slight bridge, which is always wet with the spray, has been stretched across to it. From this point the whole extent of the falls is before you. It was an awful sight to look down on the rushing terrors at my feet. I felt confused, overwhelmed, and almost stunned. Once after, on another visit, I clambered out to it over the mounds of ice in winter, but I hardly know that the impression was deeper then.

There are accidents every now and then at Niagara, but it is only wonderful that, amidst such dangers, there are no more. The truth is, that here, as well as elsewhere, familiarity breeds contempt. Thus, in 1854, a man ventured, with his son, to cross the rapids above the falls, in a skiff, to save some property which happened to be on a flat-bottomed "scow," which had broken from its moor-

ings, and stuck fast at some distance above Goat Island. The two shot out into the broken water, and were carried with terrible swiftness down toward the "scow," into which the son sprang as they shot past, fastening the skiff to it as he did so. Having taken off the goods they wished to save, the skiff, with both on board, was once more pushed off, and flew like an arrow on the foaming water, toward the Three Sisters — the name of some rocks above Goat Island. The fate of the two men seemed to be sealed, for they were nearing the centre Fall, and, to go over it, would be instant death. But they managed, when on its very verge, to push into an eddy, and reach the second Sister. On this, they landed, and having dragged ashore the skiff, carried it to the foot of the island, a proof that the "property" they wished to rescue could not have weighed very much. There, they once more launched it, and making a bold sweep down the rapids, their oars going with their utmost strength, they succeeded in reaching the shore of Goat Island in safety, though it seems to me as if, after thus tempting their fate, they hardly deserved to do so.

I was very much struck by the appearance of the rapids above the Falls, on a visit I made to an island some distance up the river, in the very middle of them. A fine broad bridge, built by the owner of the island, and of the neighboring shore,

enables you to reach it with ease. It lies about half-way between Chippewa and the Falls, on the British side. The whole surface of the great stream is broken into a long cascade, each leap of which is made with more swiftness than the one before. It is a wild, tumultuous scene, and forms a fit prelude to the spectacle to which it leads. Accidents occasionally happen here also. Just before I visited it, a little child had strayed from a party with whom she was, and must have fallen into the stream, as she was never seen again after being missed.

Some years ago, a number of people in the neighborhood formed the strange wish to see a boat, laden with a variety of animals, go down these rapids and over the Falls. It was a cruel and idle curiosity which could dictate such a thought, but they managed to get money enough to purchase a bear and some other animals, which were duly launched, unpiloted, from the shore near Chippewa. From whatever instinctive sense of danger it would be impossible to say, the creatures appeared very soon to be alarmed. The bear jumped overboard on seeing the mist of the Falls, as the people on the spot say, and by great efforts, managed to swim across so far that he was carried down to Goat Island. The other animals likewise tried to escape, but in vain. The only living creatures that remained in the boat were some geese, which could

not have escaped if they had wished, their wings having been cut short. They went over, and several were killed at once, though, curiously enough, some managed, by fluttering, to get beyond the crushing blow of the descending water, and reached the shore in safety.

CHAPTER XXIII.

The suspension-bridge at Niagara. — The whirlpool. — The battle of Lundy's Lane. — Brock's monument. — A soldier nearly drowned.

TWO miles below the Falls an attraction presents itself now, that was not in existence when I first visited them, though I have seen it often since: the Great Suspension Bridge over the chasm through which the river flows below. Made entirely of iron wire, twisted into ropes and cables of all sizes, the largest measuring ten inches through, and containing about four thousand miles of wire, it stretches, in a road twenty-four feet in breadth, in two stories, the under one for foot-passengers and carriages, the other, twenty-eight feet above it, for a steady stream of railway trains, at the height of two hundred and fifty feet over the deep rushing waters, for eight hundred feet, from the Canadian to the American shore. Two huge towers, rising nearly ninety feet on the American side, and nearly eighty on the British, bear up the vast fabric, which is firmly anchored in solid masonry built into the ground beyond. It is hard to believe, what is nevertheless the fact, that the airy

and elegant thing thus hanging over the gulf, is by no means so light as it looks, but weighs fully eight hundred tons. When you step on it and feel it tremble beneath any passing wagon, the thought of trains going over it seems like sending them to certain destruction. Yet they do go, hour after hour, and have done so safely for years, the only precaution observed being to creep along at the slowest walk. It is open at the sides — that is, you can see up and down the river, and over into the awful abyss, but my head is not steady enough to stand looking into such a depth. How Blondin could pass over on his rope has always been incomprehensible to me; the bridge itself was not broad enough for my nerves. Yet he performed his wonderful feat again and again, close by, and each time with accumulated difficulties, until, when the Prince of Wales visited Niagara, he actually carried over a man on his back from the Canadian to the American side, and came back on stilts a yard high, playing all kinds of antics on the way.

Every one has heard of the whirlpool at the Falls, and most of the visitors go down the three miles to it. To be like others, I also strolled down, but I was greatly disappointed. I had formed in my mind a very highly-wrought picture of a terrible roaring vortex, flying round in foam, at the rate of a great many miles an hour; but instead, I found a turn in the channel, which they told me was the whirlpool; though, to my notion, it needed the

name to be written over it to enable one to know what it was, like the badly-painted sign, on which the artist informed the passer-by, in large letters, "This is a horse." I dare say it would have whirled quite enough for my taste had I been in it, but from the brow of the chasm it seems to take things very leisurely indeed, as if it were treacle, rather than water. There are stories about the strength of the current, however, that shows it to be greater than is apparent from a little distance. A deserter, some years ago, tried to get over below the Falls to the American side on no better conveyance than a huge plank. But the stream was stronger than he had supposed; and in spite of all his efforts, he was forced down to this circling horror, which speedily sent him and his plank round and round in gradually contracting whirls, until, after a time, they reached the centre. There was no pushing out, and the poor wretch was kept revolving, with each end of his support sunk in the vortex by turns, requiring him to crawl backwards and forwards unceasingly for more than a day, before means were found to bring him to land. Somebody said at the time that he would surely become an expert circumnavigator after such a training; but his miraculous escape has most probably not induced many others to make the same venturesome voyage.

The village of Drummondville, a little back from the Falls, on the British side, is memorable as the

scene of the Battle of Lundy's Lane, in the war of 1812–1814. I was fortunate enough to meet with an intelligent man, who, when a boy, had seen the battle from a distance; and he went with me over the ground. In passing through a garden, on which a fine crop of Indian corn was waving, he stopped to tell me that on the evening after the battle, he saw a number of soldiers come to this spot, which was then an open field, and commence digging a great pit. Curious to know all they were doing, he went up and stood beside them, and found it was a grave for a number of poor fellows who had been shot by mistake in the darkness of the night before. An aide-de-camp had been sent off in hot haste down to Queenston from the battle, to order up reinforcements as quickly as possible, and had been obeyed so promptly that our forces on the field could not believe they had come when they heard them marching up the hill, but supposing they must be Americans, fired a volley of both cannon and musketry into their ranks. There they lie now, without any memorial, in a private garden, which is dug up every year, and replanted over their bones, as if there were no such wreck of brave hearts sleeping below. In the churchyard there were a number of tablets of wood, instead of stone, marking the graves of officers slain in the conflict. I picked up more than one which had rotted off at the ground, and were lying wherever the wind had carried them. Peach-trees, laden with fruit, hung

over and amidst the graves, and sheep were nibbling the grass. But what seemed the most vivid reminiscence of the strife was a wooden house, to which my guide led me, the sides and ends of which were perforated with a great number of holes made on the day by musket-balls; a larger hole here and there, showing where a cannon had also sent its missile through it. I was surprised to see it inhabited, with so many apertures unstopped outside; but perhaps it was plastered within.

Every part of the Niagara frontier has, indeed, its own story of war and death. On the way to Queenston I passed a gloomy chasm, into which the waters of a small stream, called the Bloody Run, fall, on their course to the river. It got its name from an incident in the old French war, very characteristic of the times and the country. A detachment of British troops was marching up the banks of the Niagara with a convoy of wagons, and had reached this point, when a band of Seneca Indians, in the service of the French, leaped out from the woods immediately over the precipice, and uttering from all sides their terrible war-whoop, rushed down, pouring in a deadly volley as they closed, and hurled them and all they had, soldiers, wagons, horses, and drivers, over the cliffs into the abyss below, where they were dashed to pieces on the rocks. It was the work almost of a moment; they were gone before they could collect themselves together, or realize their position. The little stream

was red with their blood, and out of the whole number only two escaped — the one a soldier, who, as by miracle, got back, under cover of night, to Fort Niagara, at the edge of Lake Ontario; the other a gentleman, who spurred his horse through the horde of savages on the first moment of the alarm, and got off in safety. My attention was drawn, as I got further on, to the monument of General Brock, killed at the battle of Queenston, in 1812, which stands near the village of that name, on a fine height close to the edge of the river. It is a beautiful object when viewed from a distance, and no less so on a near approach, and is, I think, as yet, the only public monument in the western province. I had often heard it spoken of with admiration before I saw it, and could easily understand why it was so. I could not but feel, that besides being a tribute to the memory of the illustrious dead, it served also to keep alive, through successive generations, an enthusiastic feeling of patriotism and of a resolute devotion to duty.

Taking the steamer at Queenston, which is a small, lifeless place, I now struck out on the waters of Ontario, to see Toronto once more. As we entered the lake, I was amused by the remark of an Irish lad, evidently fresh from his native island. Leaning close by me over the side of the vessel, he suddenly turned round from a deep musing, in which he had been absorbed, and broke out — "Och, sir! what a dale o' fine land thim lakes

cover!" Such a thought, in a country where a boundless wilderness stretches so closely in one unbroken line, seemed inexpressibly ludicrous; not to speak of the uselessness of all the land that was "uncovered," if there had been no lakes to facilitate passage from one point to another. As we left the wharf at the town of Niagara, which stands at the mouth of the river, on the lake, a great stir was caused for a short time by a soldier of the Rifles having been tumbled into the water, and nearly drowned, through the stupidity of a poor Connaughman who was in charge of the plank by which those who were leaving the steamer, before she started, were to reach the shore. He was in such a breathless hurry and wild excitement, that he would hardly leave it in its place while the visitors were crowding out; once and again he had made a snatch at it, only to have some one put his foot on it, and run off. At last, the soldier came, but just as he made a step on it, the fellow, who had his face to the shore, and saw nothing except the crowd, gave it a pull, and down went the man into the water, cutting his chin badly in falling. He evidently could not swim, and sank almost at once, but he came up to find ropes thrown out for him to cling to. But somehow he could not catch them, and he would, in another moment, have gone down again. Luckily, however, some one had sense enough to thrust down a broad ladder, which was standing near, and up this he managed

to climb, we holding the top steady till he did so. Every attention was instantly paid him; and I dare say the mishap did him no harm beyond the ducking. In a few minutes he was ashore again; and I was delighted to see the colonel, who happened to be present, give him his arm, and walk away with him, talking kindly to him as they went.

CHAPTER XXIV.

The Canadian lakes. — The exile's love of home. — The colored people in Canada. — Rice. — The Maid of the Mist. — Home-spun cloth. — A narrow road. — A grumbler. — New England emigrants. — A potato pit. — The winter's wood.

WHAT vast sheets of water the lakes of Canada are! Beginning in the far north-west, with Superior, nearly as large as all Scotland, we have Michigan, Huron, Erie, and Ontario, in succession, each more like a sea than a lake. On crossing them, you have no land in sight any more than on the ocean; and, like it, they have whole fleets on them, all through the season of navigation. They yield vast sums from their fisheries, and their waves wash shores as extensive as those of many kingdoms. It is striking how gigantic is the proportion of every thing in nature in the New World. Vast lakes and rivers, the wonderful Niagara, endless forests, and boundless prairies — all these form a great contrast to the aspects of nature in Europe. The chain of lakes, altogether, stretches over more than a thousand miles, with very short intervals between any of them, and none between some. Even Ontario, which is the smallest, is nine times

as long, and from twice to four times as broad, as the sea between Dover and Calais. I could not help thinking of the fact that there were men still living who remembered when the Indians had possession of nearly all the shore of Lake Ontario, and when only two or three of their wigwams stood on the site of the town to which I was then sailing. I found Toronto much increased since my first visit to it — its streets macadamized in some places, pavements of plank laid down on the sides of several, the houses better, and the shops more attractive. When we first came, it was as muddy a place as could be imagined; but a few years work wonders in a new country like Canada. There was now no fear of a lady losing her India-rubber overshoes in crossing the street, as one of my sisters had done on our first coming, nor were wagons to be seen stuck hard and fast in the very heart of the town. I found my married sister comfortably established, and spent a very pleasant time with her and her husband. There is, however, not much to see in Toronto even now, and still less at that time. It lies very low, near the lake, though the ground rises as it recedes from it. The neighborhood is rather uninteresting, to my taste, from the tameness of the scenery. It is an English town, however, in its feelings and outward life, and that made it delightful. It is beautiful to see how true-hearted nearly every one becomes to his mother-country when he has left it. There has often

seemed to me to be more real love of Britain out of it than in it, as if it needed to be contemplated from a distance, in order thoroughly to appreciate all its claims upon our love and respect. In Canada almost every one is a busy local politician, deeply immersed in party squabbles and manœuvres, and often separated by them from his neighbor. But let the magic name of "home" be mentioned, and the remembrance of the once-familiar land causes every other thought to be forgotten. In the time of the rebellion in 1837, before we came out, it was found, that although multitudes had talked wildly enough while things were all quiet, the moment it was proposed to rise against England, the British born part of them, and many native Canadians as well, at once went over to the old flag, to defend it, if necessary, with their lives. And when it seemed as if England needed help in the time of the war with Russia, Canada came forward in a moment, of her own accord, and raised a regiment to aid in fighting her battles, and serve her in any part of the world. Later still, when the Prince of Wales went over, they gave him such a reception as showed their loyalty most nobly. Through the whole province it seemed as if the population were smitten with an universal enthusiasm, and despaired of exhibiting it sufficiently. And but yesterday, when rumors of war rose once more, the whole people were kindled in a moment with a loyal zeal.

I was very much struck, on this trip, with the number of colored people who have found a refuge in Canada. In all the hotels, most of the waiters, and a large proportion of the cooks, seemed to be colored. They take to these employments naturally, and never appear to feel themselves in greater glory than when fussing about the table at meals, or wielding the basting-ladle in the kitchen. They very seldom turn to trades, and even their children, as they grow up, are not much more inclined to them. I used to think it was, perhaps, because, as slaves, they might not have learned trades, but this would not apply to those born in Canada, who might learn them if they liked. They become, instead, whitewashers, barbers, or waiters, and cooks, like their fathers before them. I was told, however, that they are a well-conducted set of people, rarely committing any crimes, and very temperate. They have places of worship of their own, and I was amused by a friend telling us, one night, how he had met their minister going home, carrying a piece of raw beef at his side by a string, and how, when he had one evening gone to their chapel, the official, a colored man, had told him that "the folks had tu'ned out raither lean in the mo'nin, and, 'sides, the wood's sho't — so I guess we sha'n't open to night." Poor, simple creatures, it is, indeed, a grand thing that there is a home open for them like Canada, where they can have the full enjoyment of liberty. Long may the red

cross of St. George wave an invitation to their persecuted race to come and find a refuge under its shadow!

I went home again by way of Hamilton, to which I crossed in a steamer. The white houses, peeping through the woods, were a pretty sight at the places where we stopped, the larger ones standing on all sides, detached, in the midst of pleasant grass and trees; the others, in the villages, built with an easy variety of shape and size that could hardly be seen in an older country. The tin spires of churches rose, every here and there, brightly through the trees, reminding one that the faith of his dear native land had not been forgotten, but was cherished as fondly in the lonely wilderness as it had been at home. Hamilton, the only town of Canada West, with a hill near it, gave me a day's pleasure in a visit to a friend, and a ramble over "the mountain," as they call the ridge behind it. The sight of streets built of stone, instead of wood or brick, was positively delightful, bringing one in mind of the stability of an older country. "Have you ever seen any of this?" said my friend, when we were back in his room, and he handed me a grain different from any I had ever noticed before I said I had not. It was rice; got from Rice Lake when he was down there lately. The lake lies a little north of Cobourg, which is seventy miles or so below Toronto. He was very much pleased with his trip. The road to it lies, after leaving

Cobourg, through a fine farming country for some distance, and then you get on what the folks call 'the plains' — great reaches of sandy soil, covered with low, scrubby oak bushes, thick with filberts. As you get to the lake, the view is really beautiful, while the leaves are out. The road stretches on through avenues of green, and, at last, when you get nearer, there are charming peeps of the water through a fringe of beautiful trees, and over and through a world of creepers, and vines, and bushes of all sorts. The rice grows only in the shallow borders of the lake, rising in beds along the shore, from the deep mud, in which it takes root. It looks curious to see grain in the middle of water. The Indians have it left to them as a perquisite, and they come when it gets ripe, and gather it in their canoes, sailing along and bending down the ears over the edges of their frail vessels, and beating out the rice as they do so. They get a good deal of shooting as well as rice, for the ducks and wild fowl are as fond of the ears as themselves, and flock in great numbers to get a share of them. There are great beds along the shores of the Georgian Bay, on Lake Huron, as well as on Rice Lake, but there also it is left for the Indians.

Of course I was full of my recent visit to the Falls, and dosed my friend with all the details which occurred to me. He had noticed, like me, now the windows rattle unceasingly in the neighborhood, from the concussion of the air, and told

me of a curious consequence of the dampness, from the minute powdery spray that floats far in every direction ; — that they could not keep a piano from warping and getting out of tune, even as far as a mile from the Falls, near the river's edge. The glorious sunrise I had seen from Drummondville came back again to my thoughts ; how, on rising early one morning, the great cloud at the Falls, and the long swathe of vapor that lay over the chasm for miles below, had been changed into gold by the light, and shone like the gates of heaven ; and I remembered how I had been struck with a great purple vine near the river's edge, which, after climbing a lofty elm that had been struck and withered by lightning, flung its arms, waving far, into the air. "Did you see the *Maid of the Mist?*" he asked. Of course I had, and we talked of it ; how the little steamer plies, many times a day, from the landing-places, close up to the Falls, going sometimes so near that you stand on the bank, far above, in anxious excitement lest it should be sucked into the cauldron and perish at once. I have stood thus, wondering if the paddles would ever get her out of the white foam into which she had pressed, and it seemed as if, though they were doing their utmost, it was a terrible time before they gained their point. If any accident were to happen to the machinery, woe to those on board ! As it is, they get drenched, in spite of oil-skin dresses, and must be heartily glad when they reach firm footing once more.

I was sorry when I had to leave and turn my face once more toward home. As the stage drove on, the roads being still in their best condition, I had leisure to notice every thing. The quantity of homespun gray woollen cloth, worn by the farmers and country people, was very much greater than I had seen it in previous years, and was in admirable keeping with the country around. The wives and daughters in the farm-houses had a good deal to do in its manufacture. The wool is taken to the mill to get cleaned, a certain weight being kept back from each lot in payment; then the snowy-white fleece is twisted into rolls, and in that condition it is taken back by the owners to be spun into yarn at home. I like the hum of the spinning-wheel amazingly, and have often waited to look at some tidy girl, walking backwards and forwards at her task, at each approach sending off another hum, as she drives the wheel round once more. But the cloth is not made at home. The mill gets the yarn when finished, and weaves it into the homely useful fabric I saw everywhere around. At one place we had an awkward stoppage on a piece of narrow corduroy road. There happened to be a turn in it, so that the one end could not be seen from the other, and we had got on some distance, bumping dreadfully from log to log, when a wagon made its appearance coming toward us. It could not pass and it could not turn, and there was water at both sides. What was to be done? It was a

great question for the two drivers. Their tongues went at a great rate at each other for awhile, but, after a time, they cooled down enough to discuss the situation, as two statesmen would the threatened collision of empires. They finally solved the difficulty by unyoking the horses from the wagon, and pushing it back over the logs with infinite trouble, after taking out as much of the load as was necessary. Of course the passengers helped with right good-will, turning the wheels, and straining this way and that, till the road was clear, when we drove on once more. The bridge at Brantford, when we reached it, was broken down, having remained so since the last spring floods, when it had been swept away by the ice and water together, and the coach had to get through the stream as well as it could. The horses behaved well, the vehicle itself slipped and bumped over and against the stones at the bottom; but it got a cleaning that it very much needed, and neither it nor we took any harm. A great lumpish farmer, who travelled with me, helped to pass the time by his curious notions and wonderful power of grumbling. A person beside him, who appeared to know his ways, dragged him into conversation, whether he would or not. He maintained there was nothing In Canada like what he had seen in Scotland; his wheat had been destroyed by the midge, year after year, or by the rust; his potatoes, he averred, had never done well, and every thing else had been

alike miserable. At last he seemed to have got through his lamentations, and his neighbor struck in — "Well, at any rate, Mr. M'Craw, you can't say but your turnips are first-rate this year; why, one of them will fill a bucket when you cut it up for the cattle." But Mr. M'Craw was not to be beaten, and had a ready answer. "They're far owre guid — I'll never be fit to use them — the half o' them 'ill rot in the grund, if they dinna choke the puir kye wi the size o' them." The whole of us laughed, but Mr. M'Craw only shook his head. As we were trotting along we overtook an Irishman — a laboring man — and were hailed by him as we passed. "Will ye take us to Ingersoll for a quarter (an English shilling)?" The driver pulled up — made some objections, but at last consented, and Paddy instantly pulled out his money, and reached it into the hand which was stretched down to receive it. "Jump in, now — quick." But, indeed, he needn't have said it, he was only too anxious to do so. The coach window was down, and the pane being large, a good-sized opening was left. In a moment Pat was on the step below; the next, first one leg came through the window-frame, amidst our unlimited laughter; then the body tried to follow, but this was no easy business. "Wait a minit. I'll be thro' in a minit," he shouted to us. "Get out, man, do ye no ken the use o' a door?" urged Mr. M'Craw. But in the mean time Pat had crushed himself through, in some

way, and had landed in an extraordinary fashion, as gently as he could, across our knees. We soon got him into his seat, but it was long before we ceased laughing at the adventure. He could never have been in a coach in his life before. I saw a misfortune happen in an omnibus some years after, on the way down to Toronto from the North, which was the only thing to be compared to it for its effect on the risible powers of the spectators. A gentleman travelling with me then, had a favorite dog with him, which he was very much afraid he might lose, but which the driver would not allow him to take inside. At every stoppage the first thought of both man and beast seemed the same, to see if all was right with the other. The back of the omnibus was low, and the dog was eager to get in, but he and his master could only confer with each other from opposite sides of the door. At last, as we got near the town we came to a halt once more. The gentleman was all anxiety about his dog. For the fiftieth time he put his head to the window to see if every thing was right. But it happened that, just as he did so, the dog was in full flight for the same opening, having summoned up all his strength for a terrible jump through the only entrance, and reached it at the same moment as his master's face, against which he came with a force which sent himself back to the ground and sorely disturbed his owner's composure. It was lucky the animal was not very large, else it might have done

serious damage; as it was, an astounding shock was the only apparent result. It was a pity he was hurt at all, but the thought of blocking off the dog with his face, as you do a cricket ball with a bat, and the sublime astonishment of both dog and man at the collision, were irresistibly ludicrous.

On our way from London to Lake Huron we came on a curious sight at the side of the road — a New England family, on their way from Vermont to Michigan, travelling, and living, in a wagon, like the Scythians of old. The wagon was of comparatively slight construction, and was arched over with a white canvas roof, so as to serve for a conveyance by day, and a bedroom by night, though it must have been hard work to get a man and his wife, and some children, all duly stretched out at full length, packed into it. Some of them, I suppose, took advantage of wayside inns for their nightly lodging. A thin pipe, projecting at the back, showed that they had a small stove with them, to cook their meals. Two cows were slowly walking behind, the man himself driving them; and a tin pail, hanging on the front of the wagon, spoke of part of their milk being in the process of churning into butter by the shaking on the way. They were very respectable looking people — as nearly all New Englanders are — and had, no doubt, sold off their property, whatever it might have been, in their native State, to go in search of a new "location," as they call it — that is, a fresh settlement

in the Far West, with the praises of which, at that time, the country was full. It must have taken them a very long time to get so far at such a snail's pace; but time would eventually take a snail round the world, if it had enough of it, and they seemed to lay no stress whatever on the rate of their progress. They had two horses, two cows, and the wagon, to take with them, until they should reach their new neighborhood; and to accomplish that was worth some delay. One of my fellow-travellers told me that such wagon-loads were then an every-day sight on the road past Brantford; and indeed I can easily believe it. Michigan was then a garden of Eden, according to popular report; but it was not long in losing its fame, which passed to Wisconsin, and from that has passed to other States or territories since. The New England folks are as much given to leaving their own country as any people, and much more than most. Their own States are too poor to keep them well at home; and they have energy, shrewdness, and very often high principle, which make them welcome in any place where they may choose to settle in preference. I know parts in some of the New England States where there are hardly any young men or young women; they have left for the towns and cities more or less remote, where they can best push their fortunes. It is the same very much in Nova Scotia, and, indeed, must be so with all poor countries.

I was very glad, when I got home, to find all my circle quite well, and had a busy time of it for a good while, telling them all I had seen and heard. They were busy with their fall-work — getting the potatoes and turnips put into pits, to keep them from the frost when it should set in, and getting ready a great stock of firewood. Our pit was a curious affair, which I should have mentioned earlier, since we made it in the second fall we were on the river. We dug a great hole like a grave, many feet deep, large enough to hold a hundred bushels of potatoes, and I don't know what besides. The bottom of this excavation was then strewed with loose boards, and the sides were walled round with logs, set up side by side, to keep the earth from falling in. On the top, instead of a roof, we laid a floor of similar logs, close together, and on this we heaped up earth to the thickness of about three feet, to keep out the cold, however severe it might be. The entrance was at one end, down a short ladder, which brought you to a door, roughly fitted in. The first year it was made, we paid for imperfect acquaintance with such things by bringing a heavy loss on ourselves. We had put in eighty bushels of potatoes, and, to keep out the least trace of frost, filled up the hole where the ladder was with earth. But in the spring when we opened the pit to get out our seed, we found the whole heap to be worthless. I remember the day very well; it was very bright and beautiful, and we

were all in high spirits. The earth was removed from the ladder end in a very short time, and young Grahame, one of a neighbor's boys, asked leave to go in first, and bring out the first basketful. Down he leaped, pulled open the door, and crept in. We waited a minute, but there was no sign of his coming out again. We called to him, but got no answer; and at last I jumped down to find the poor little fellow overpowered from the effects of the carbonic acid gas, with which the pit was filled. The earth at the ladder end had entirely prevented the necessary ventilation, and the potatoes had "heated," and had become perfectly rotten. We managed better after this by putting straw instead of earth into the opening; but the right plan would have been to sink a small hollow tube of wood — a slender piece of some young tree, with the middle scooped out, through the top, to serve as a ventilator. It was a great loss to us, as the potatoes were then at the unusual price of a dollar a bushel, and eighty dollars were to us, at that time, a small fortune.

The laying in the winter's wood was a tedious affair: it was cut in the fall, and part of it dragged by the oxen to the house in the shape of long logs; but we left the greater part of the drawing till the snow came. It was a nasty job to cut off each day what would serve the kitchen, and keep the fires brisk; and I sometimes even yet feel a twinge of conscience at the way I used to dole out a fixed

number of pieces to my sisters, keeping it as small as possible, and much smaller than it should have been. I was willing enough to work at most things, and can't blame myself for being lazy; but to get up from the warm fire on a cold morning to chop fire-wood, was freezing work; though this should certainly not have kept me from cutting a few more sticks, after all. I am afraid we are too apt to be selfish in these trifles, even when we are the very reverse in things of more moment. If I had the chance, now I am older, I think I would atone for my stinginess, cost me what freezing it might.

CHAPTER XXV.

Thoughts for the future. — Changes. — Too hard study. - - Education in Canada. — Christmas markets. — Winter amusements. — Ice-boats. — Very cold ice. — Oil-springs. — Changes on the farm. — Growth of Canada. — The American climate. — Old England again.

WHEN we had been five years on the farm, and Henry and I, and the girls, were now getting to be men and women, the question of what we should do to get started in the world, became more and more pressing. Robert wished to get married; Henry and I, and the two girls, all alike, wanted to be off; and the farm was clearly unfit to support more than one household. It took a long time for us to come to any conclusion, but at last we decided that Robert should have the land, that the girls should be sent for a time to a school down the country, and Henry and I should go to To ronto, he to study medicine, and I law. Of course, all this could not be managed at once, but it was greatly facilitated by remittances from my brothers in England, who undertook by far the larger proportion of the cost. I confess I felt more sorrow at leaving the old place than I had expected, though

it was still for years to be my home whenever I got free for a time; and it was long before I could get fairly into Blackstone, and Chitty, and Smith. Had I known how my life would ultimately turn, I don't think I should ever have troubled them, for here I am now, my law laid aside, snugly in England again, a partner in the mercantile establishment of my brothers, who had continued at home. I did not like the law in its every-day details of business, though all must recognize the majesty of the great principles on which the whole fabric rests; and I got tired utterly of the country, at last, perhaps from failing health, for I bent with too much zeal to my studies when I once began. The chance of leaving Canada for my native land was thus unspeakably pleasing; and it rewarded the gratitude with which I once more reached it, by giving me back a good part of the strength I had lost. When I look back on the years I spent over my books, and remember how I presumed on my youth, and tasked myself night and day to continuous work, it seems as if my folly had only been matched by my guilt. To undermine our health is to trifle with all our advantages at once. Honest, earnest work is all well enough, and nobody can ever be any thing without it, but if there be too much of it, it defeats its own object, and leaves him who has overtaxed himself behind those who have made a more discreet use of their strength. I would gladly give half of what I learned by all my

years of close study, for some of the health I lost in acquiring it. Indeed, I question if I gained more, after all my fagging on with a wearied body and mind, than I would if I had taken proper relaxation and amusement, and returned fresh and vigorous to my books. The Genoese archers lost the battle of Cressy by a shower falling on their bow strings, while those on our side gained it by having their weapons safely in cases till the clouds were past. So, no doubt, it should be in our management of those powers within, on which our success in student life depends — let them be safely shielded betimes, and they will be fresh for action when others are relaxed and useless. How much time is spent when the mind is wearied, without our being able to retain any thing of what we read! How often have I closed my book, at last, with the feeling that really it might have been shut long before. I read in the office, and out of it, whenever I had a chance; had some book or other on the table at my meals; kept rigidly from visiting friends, that I might economize every moment; poked my fire, and lighted a fresh candle at midnight, and gained some knowledge, indeed, but at the cost of white, or rather yellow cheeks — a stoop of the shoulders, and a hollow chest — cold feet, I fear, for life, and a stomach so weak that I am seldom without a memento of my folly in the pain it gives me. An hour or two in the open air every day would have saved me all these abatements, and

would have quickened my powers of work so as more than to make up for their being indulged in a little play.

Since my day, great facilities have been afforded in Canada for education. There are now grammar schools, with very moderate fees, in every part of the country, and a lad or young man can very easily get a scholarship which takes him free through the University at Toronto.* Every county has one or more to give away each year. There is thus every chance for those who wish to rise, and Canada will no doubt show some notable results from the facility she has liberally provided for the encouragement of native genius and talent.

My being for a length of time in a town showed me new features of a colonial life which I should in vain have looked for in the country. In many respects I might easily have forgotten I was in Canada at all, for you might as well speak of getting a correct idea of England from living in a provincial town, as of Canada by living in the streets of Toronto. The dress of the people is much the same as in Britain. Hats and light overcoats are not entirely laid aside even in winter, though fur caps and gauntlets, after all, are much more common. The ladies sweep along with more show

* The university has been long established, but since I attended its classes, it has been put on a more liberal basis — the number of chairs enlarged, and facilities for obtaining its advantages greatly increased.

than in England, as if they dressed for out of door display especially ; but they are, no doubt, tempted to this by the clearness and dryness of the air, which neither soils nor injures fine things, as the coal-dust and dampness does in English towns. The most plainly-dressed ladies I used to see were the wife and daughters of the governor-general.

The markets at Christmas were usually a greater attraction to many people than they used to be in England. If the weather chanced to be cold, you would see huge files of frozen pigs standing on their four legs in front of the stalls, as if they had been killed when at a gallop ; countless sheep hung over-head, with here and there one of their heads carefully gilded, to add splendor to the exhibition. Some deer were almost always noticed at some of the stalls, and it was not unusual to see the carcase of a bear contributing its part to the general show. As to the oxen, they were too fat for my taste, though the butcher seemed to be proud of them in proportion to their obesity. The market was not confined to a special building, though there was one for the purpose. Long ranges of farmers' wagons, ranged at each side of it, showed similar treasures of frozen pork and mutton, the animals standing entire at the feet of their owners, who sat among them waiting for purchasers. Frozen geese, ducks, chickens, and turkeys abounded, and that household was very poor indeed which had not one or other to grace the festival.

Winter was a great time for amusement to the townspeople, from the nearness of the broad bay which in summer forms their harbor, and, after the frost, their place of recreation. It was generally turned into a great sheet of ice across its whole breadth of two miles, some time about Christmas, and continued like rock till the middle of April. As long as there were no heavy falls of snow to bury it, or after they had been blown off by the wind, the skating was universal. Boys and men alike gave way to the passion for it. The ice was covered with one restless throng from morning to night. School-boys made for it as soon as they got free; the clerks and shopmen were down the instant the shutters were up and the door fastened; even ladies crowded to it, either to skate with the assistance of some gentleman, or to see the crowd, or to be pushed along in chairs mounted on runners. The games of different kinds played between large numbers were very exciting. Scotchmen with their "curling," others with balls, battering them hither and thither, in desperate efforts to carry them to a particular boundary. Then there were the ice-boats gliding along in every direction, with their loads of well-dressed people reclining on them, and their huge sail swelling overhead. These contrivances were new to me, though I had been so long in Canada. They consist of a three-cornered frame of wood, large enough to give room for five or six people lying down or sitting on them,

the upper side boarded over, and the lower shod on each angle with an iron runner. A mast and sail near the sharp point which goes foremost furnish the means of propulsion. The two longest runners are fixed, but the short one at the back is worked by a helm, the steersman having actual control of the machine by its aid, and keeping within reach the cleats of the sail, that he may loosen or tighten it as he sees necessary. Many of the lads about were very skilful in managing them, and would sail as close to the wind, and veer and tack, as if they were in an ordinary boat in the water, instead of an oddly-shaped sleigh on ice. A very little wind sufficed to drive them at a good speed if the ice was good, and there was a good deal of excitement in watching the cracks and air-holes as you rushed over them. I have seen them sometimes going with great rapidity. They say, indeed, that occasionally they cross the harbor in less than four minutes — a rate of speed equal to nearly thirty miles an hour.

The ice-trade of Toronto is a considerable branch of industry during the winter, and gangs of men are employed for weeks together sawing out great blocks about two feet square from the parts of the bay where it is clearest and best for use. These are lifted by poles furnished with iron hooks, into carts, and taken to houses especially prepared for keeping them through the hot weather of the following summer. An ordinary wooden frame

building is lined inside with a wall all round, at from two to three feet from the outer one, and the space between is filled with waste tan bark rammed close, to keep out the heat when it comes. In this wintry shelter the cubes of ice are built up in solid masses, and, when full, the whole is finally protected by double doors, with a large quantity of straw between them. In the hot months you may see light carts with cotton covering stretched over them in every street, carrying round the contents — now broken in more salable pieces — the words "Spring ice" on each side of the white roof inviting the housekeepers to supply themselves. In hotels, private dwellings, railway carriages, steamers, and indeed everywhere, drinking-water in summer is invariably cooled by lumps of gelid luxury, and not a few who take some of the one, finish by sucking and swallowing some of the other. I saw an advertisement lately in a New Orleans paper, begging the visitors at hotels not to eat the ice in the water-jugs this season, as, from the war having cut off the supply from the North, it was very scarce. At table, in most houses, the butter is regularly surmounted by a piece of ice, and it seems a regular practice with some persons at hotels and on steamers to show their breeding and selfishness by knocking aside this useful ornament and taking a piece which it covered, as the coolest and hardest, leaving the others to put it up again if they like.

Boiling water never gets hotter than two hundred and twelve degrees, because, at that heat it flies off in steam, but ice may be made a great deal colder than it is when it first freezes. English ice is pretty cold, but it never gets far below thirty-two degrees, which is the freezing-point. Canadian ice, on the other hand, is as much colder as the air of Canada in which it is formed, is than that of England. Thus there is as much more cold in a piece of ice, of a given size, from the one country, than in a piece of a similar size from the other, and where cold is wished to be produced, as it is in all drinks in summer in hot climates, Canadian ice is, of course, much more valuable than any warmer kind would be. The Americans have long ago thought of this, and have created a great trade in their ice, which is about as cold as that of Canada, taking it in ships, prepared very much as the ice-houses are, to India, and many other countries, where it is sold often at a great profit. You read of the ice crop as you would hear farmers speak of their crop of wheat or potatoes. They have not got so far as this that I know of in Canada, but if Boston ice can command a good price in Calcutta or Madras, that of the Lower St. Lawrence should be able to drive it out of the market, for it is very much colder. A few inches of it are like a concentrated portable winter.

In the fine farms round Toronto a great many fields are without any stumps, sometimes from their

having been cleared so long that the stumps have rotted out, and sometimes by their having been pulled out bodily as you would an old tooth, by a stump machine. It is a simple enough contrivance. A great screw is raised over the stump on a strong frame of wood which is made to enclose it; some iron grapnels are fastened into it on different sides, and a long pole put sticking out at one side for a horse, and then — after some twists — away it goes, with far more ease than would be thought possible. The outlying roots have, of course, to be cut away first, and a good deal of digging done, to let the screw, and the horse or horses, have every chance, but it is a much more expeditious plan than any other known in Canada, and must be a great comfort to the farmer by letting him plough and harrow without going round a wilderness of stumps in each field.

A singular discovery has been made of late years about ten miles behind Robert's farm in Bidport, of wells yielding a constant supply of petroleum, or rock oil, instead of water. The quantity obtained is enormous, and as the oil is of a very fine quality and fit for most ordinary purposes, it is of great value. Strangely enough, not only in Canada but also in the States, the same unlooked-for source has been found at about the same time, supplying the same kind of oil. The wells of Pennsylvania are amazingly productive. I have been assured that there is a small river in one of the townships of the

State, called Oil Creek, which is constantly covered with a thick coat of oil, from the quantity that oozes from each side of the banks. The whole soil around is saturated with it, and this, with the necessity of fording the water, has destroyed a great many valuable horses, which are found to get inflamed and useless in the legs by the irritation the oil causes. Wells are sunk in every part of the neighborhood, each of which spouts up oil as an artesian well does water, and that to such an amazing extent, that from some of them, hundreds of barrels, it is affirmed, have been filled in a day. Indeed, there is one well, which is known by the well of "The Brawly," which, if we can believe the accounts given, in sixty days sponted out thirty-three thousand barrels of oil, and some others are alleged to have yielded more than two thousand barrels in twenty-four hours. Unfortunately, preparations had not, in most cases, been made for catching this extraordinary quantity, so that a great proportion of it ran off and was lost. The depth of the well varies. Some are close to the surface, but those which yield most are from five to eight hundred feet deep, and there, seemed to reach a vast lake of oil which is to all appearance inexhaustible. They manage to save the whole produce now by lining the wells, which are mere holes about six inches in diameter, for some depth with copper sheathing, and putting a small pipe with stop-cocks in at the top, which enables them to con-

trol the flow as easily as they do that of water. If we think of the vast quantities of coal stored up in different parts, it will diminish our astonishment at the discovery of these huge reservoirs of oil, for both seem to have the same source, from the vast beds of vegetation of the early eras of the globe; if, indeed, the oil does not often rise from decomposition of coal itself, for it occurs chiefly in the coal measures. We shall no doubt have full scientific accounts of them, after a time, and as they become familiar we shall lose the feeling of wonder which they raised at first. Except to the few who are thoughtful, nothing that is not new and strange seems worthy of notice; but, if we consider aright, what is wonderful in itself is no less so because we have become accustomed to it. It is one great difference between a rude and a cultivated mind, that the one has only a gaping wonder at passing events or discoveries, while the other seeks to find novelty in what is already familiar. The one looks only at a result before him, the other tries to find out causes. The one only looks at things as a whole, the other dwells on details and examines the minutest parts. The one finds food for his curiosity in his first impressions, and when these fade, turns aside without any further interest; the other discovers wonders in things the most common, insignificant, or apparently worthless. Science got the beautiful metal — aluminium — out of the clay which ignorance trod under foot; through Sir

Humphrey Davy it got iodine out of the scrapings of soap-kettles, which the soap-boilers had always thrown out, and it extracts the beautiful dyes we call Magenta and Solferino, from coal-tar, which used to be a worthless nuisance near every gas-house.

My brother Robert's farm, when I last saw it, was very different from my first recollection of it. He has a nice little brick house built, and frame barns have taken the place of the old log ones that served us long ago. After our leaving he commenced a new orchard of the best trees he could get — a nursery established sixty miles off down the river, supplying young trees of the best kinds cheaply. They have flourished, and must by this time be getting quite broad and venerable. He has some good horses, a nice gig for summer, with a leather cover to keep off the sun or the storm, and a sleigh for winter, with a very handsome set of furs. Most of the land is cleared, and he is able to keep a man all the time, so that he has not the hard work he once had. His fences are new and good, and the whole place looked very pleasant in summer. All this progress, however, has not been made from the profits of the farm. A little money left by a relative to each of us gave him some capital, and with it he opened a small store on his lot in a little house built for the purpose. There was no pretence of keeping shop, but when a customer came he called at the house, and any one who hap-

pened to be at hand went with him and unlocked the door, opened the shutter, and supplied him, locking all safely again when he was gone. In this primitive way he has made enough to keep him very comfortably with his family, the land providing most of what they eat. They have a school within a mile of them, but it is rather an humble one, and there is a clergyman for the church at the wharf two miles down. Henry established himself in a little village when he first got his degree, but was thought so much of by his professors that he has been asked to take the chair of surgery, which he now holds. My two sisters, Margaret and Eliza, both married, but only the former is now living, the other having been dead for some years. Margaret is married to a worthy Presbyterian minister, and, if not rich, is, at least, comfortable, in the plain way familiar in Canada.

When we first went to Canada no more was meant by that name than the strip of country along the St. Lawrence, in the Lower Province, and, in the Upper, the peninsula which is bounded by the great lakes — Huron, Erie, and Ontario. Since then, however, the discovery of gold in California and Fraser's River has given a wide range to men's thoughts, and awakened an ambition in the settled districts to claim as their domain the vast region of British America, stretching away west to the shores of the Pacific, and north to the Arctic Ocean. I used to think all this vast tract only fit for the wild

animals to which it was for the most part left, but there is nothing like a little knowledge for changing mere prejudice. There is of course a part of it which is irredeemably desolate, but there are immense reaches which will, certainly, some day, be more highly valued than they are now. The nearly untouched line on the north of Lake Huron has been found to be rich in mines of copper. The Red River district produces magnificent wheat. The River Saskatchewan, flowing in two great branches from the west and north-west to Lake Winnepeg, drains a country more than six times as large as the whole of England and Wales, and everywhere showing the most glorious woods and prairies, which are proofs of its wealth as an agricultural region. The Mackenzie River drains another part of the territory eight times as large as England and Wales together, and the lower parts of it, at least, have a climate which promises comfort and plenty. It is no less than two thousand five hundred miles in length, and is navigable by steamboats for twelve hundred miles from its mouth. It is a singular fact that the further west you go on the North American continent, the milder the climate. Vancouver's Island, which is more than two hundred miles further north than Toronto, has a climate like that of England; instead of the extremes of Canada, as you go up the map, the difference between the west and east sides of the continent becomes as great as if we were to find in Newcastle the same

temperature in winter as French settlers enjoy in Algiers. The musk oxen go more than four hundred miles further north in summer, on the western, than they do on the eastern side, and the elk and moose-deer wander nearly six hundred miles further north in the grass season, on the one than on the other.

It is indeed more wonderful that the east side of America should be so cold than that the west should be so much milder. Toronto is on a line with the Pyrenees and Florence, and yet has the climate of Russia instead of that of southern France or Italy; and Quebec, with its frightful winters and roasting summers, would stand nearly in the middle of France, if it were carried over in a straight line to Europe. Yet we know what a wonderful difference there is in England, which is, thus, far to the north of it. It is to the different distribution of land and sea in the two hemispheres, the mildness in the one case, and the coldness in the other, must be attributed. The sea which stretches round the British Islands, warmed by the influence of the Gulf Stream, is the great source of their comparative warmth, tempering, by its nearly uniform heat, alike the fierce blasts of the north and the scorching airs of the south. In Sir Charles Lyell's "Principles of Geology," you will find maps of the land and sea on the earth, so arranged, that in one, all the land would be comparatively temperate, while in the other, it would all be com-

paratively cold. In America it is likely that the great mountains that run north and south in three vast chains, beginning, in the west, with the Cascade Mountains, followed, at wide distances, by the Rocky Mountains, rising in their vast height and length, as a second barrier, on the east of them, and by the vast nameless chain which stretches, on the east side of the continent, from the north shore of Lake Superior to the south of King William's Land, on the Arctic Ocean — modify the climate of the great North-west to some extent, but it is very hard to speak with any confidence on a point so little known.

I have already said that I am glad I am back again in dear Old England, and I repeat it now that I am near the end of my story. I have not said any thing about my stay in Nova Scotia, because it did not come within my plan to do so, but I include it in my thoughts when I say, that, after all I have seen these long years, I believe "there's no place like home." If a boy really wish to get on and work as he ought, he will find an opening in life in his own glorious country, without leaving it for another. Were the same amount of labor expended by any one here, as I have seen men bestow on their wild farms in the bush, they would get as much for it in solid comfort and enjoyment, and would have around them through life the thousand delights of their native land. Some people can leave the scene of their

boyhood and the friends of their youth, and even of their manhood, without seeming to feel it, but I do not envy them their indifference. I take no shame in confessing that I felt toward England, while away from it, what dear Oliver Goldsmith says so touchingly of his brother:

> "Where'er I roam, whatever realms to see,
> My heart, untravell'd, fondly turns to thee:
> Still to my *country* turns, with ceaseless pain,
> And drags at each remove a lengthening chain."

THE END.